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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
If the election is held today, which of these four who want to run for the delegate position would you vote for?

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I N S I D E



Volunteer Militia

Frustrated by recent political setbacks, tea party leaders and some conservative members of the Oklahoma Legislature say they would like to create a new volunteer militia.

Nation...Page 16



Human Error

Russian investigators suggested human error may have been to blame in the plane crash that killed the Polish president and 95 others.

World...Page 17

Coco Is Back



The late night guessing game is over, with a startling twist: Conan O'Brien has chosen TBS as his future talk-show home.

Life & Style...Page 19

Buckingham wants to stop autonomous agencies' hiring of private counsels. **PAGE 2**
Federal judge orders parties in lawsuit vs Fitial, Fund to file reports. **PAGE 4**

Government sued over Puerto Rico final dump closure project

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

GPPC Inc., through its counsel Mark B. Hanson, filed a lawsuit yesterday against government officials over procurement decisions made on the Puerto Rico dump final

closure project, which has a potential contract of almost \$12 million.

In a 13-page petition filed in the Superior Court, Hanson sought judicial review of the actions made by capital improvement project contracting officer James R. Stump, and Procurement and Supply Division Director

Herman S. Sablan.

Hanson asked the court to disqualify the bid submitted by Innovative Technical Solutions Inc., ITSI, and to prevent any government contract award to ITSI.

GPPC's court filing came after the Office of the Pub-

See GOVERNMENT on Page 4

Saipan motorists reeling from steadily rising cost of gasoline

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Rodney Sato, 36, said a \$20 worth of gasoline used to last him two weeks but these days, the same amount lasts only for three to four days supply of gasoline for his vehicle because of the steady increase in the pump prices of Shell Marianas and Mobil Oil Marianas products.

Sato, a father of two and a resident of Kagman, is just among the thousands of Saipan motorists reeling from the frequent gasoline price increases.

Shell increased its pump prices by 10 cents a

See SAIPAN on Page 4

The 10-cent per gallon increases in the pump prices of all gasoline products are displayed at a Mobil gasoline station on Middle Road-Garapan yesterday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



Burglars steal church copier

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Burglars broke into the Cornerstone Christian Church in As Perdido on Monday and stole a copier worth over \$2,000.

The Canon copier was taken away from the church's office, according to Pastor Manuelito Rey, who discovered the break-in.

Rey said he noticed that the copier was missing when he checked the office on Monday at 10:30pm.

He said he believes that possibly there could be more than one suspect as the copier

See BURGLARS on Page 4

'Hate e-mails' bombard NMC chair, interim president

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER



King

The chairwoman of the Northern Marianas College Board of Regents and its interim president have been enduring hate e-mails from unscrupulous individuals the past several months.

See HATE on Page 4



'NO TO WORK HOUR CUTS'

Residents voice their opposition to House Bill 17-45, which seeks to cut government work hours from 80 to 70 per pay period for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2010, during a public hearing held by the Senate Fiscal Affairs Committee at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe on Monday night. Residents offered senators with alternative ways for the government to cut costs and generate revenue. The Fitial administration, however, issued notices of work hour cuts to over 400 Executive Branch contract or excepted service employees as of yesterday afternoon, a process that is separate from the House austerity bill pending at the Senate.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

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Local

Buckingham wants to stop autonomous agencies' hiring of private counsels

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The CNMI government has been violating constitutional provisions for 20 years now by allowing its autonomous agencies to hire private counsels, Attorney General Edward Buckingham disclosed yesterday.

In his presentation during the regular meeting of the Rotary Club of Saipan at Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's restaurant, Buckingham said the OAG is currently in the process of exploring ways on how to put government lawyers in autonomous agencies instead of letting these agencies retain private lawyers.

"The constitution of the CNMI talks about the Office of the Attorney General as responsible to be the legal advisor for the executive branch of the Commonwealth," he said.

That duty, the AG said, is what they are currently in the process of reviewing.

"It's been about 20 years on the process of having some ex-

emptions in the statute," Buckingham said.

He said the way the system works is that the highest authority is the constitution than statutes and regulations.

"So if there are conflicts between statutes and constitution, our position is that the constitution needs to prevail," he pointed out.



Buckingham

Buckingham said there is one constitution and there are three branches of government.

"If you're talking about the legislative or judicial branch of the government I would concur. The constitution talks about the duty of the Office of the Attorney General. So it is the Attorney General that has the duty to serve as the legal advisor for the Commonwealth," he said.

When *Saipan Tribune* asked how they are going to implement their plan, Buckingham said it is still in the working progress as they are exploring different ways to address the issue.

Buckingham said the OAG is structured constitutionally as the legal advisor of the Commonwealth, but over the course of years for many different reasons there are different agencies such as the Commonwealth Ports Authority, the Marianas Visitors Authority, and some others, that have retained their own attorneys.

He said it is financially prudent for the government to get one assistant attorney general

CUC appoints interim legal counsel

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has appointed senior attorney Deborah E. Fisher as interim in-house counsel replacing former legal counsel Timothy M. Connor who passed away recently.

In a statement, the utilities corporation said Fisher had previously represented the agency in certain civil litigation matters, and had worked closely with the former legal counsel over the past six months.

CUC said Fisher will serve the position until a permanent individual is named to the post.

Her tasks will cover defending CUC from lawsuits, assisting with compliance issues under the stipulated orders, and assist CUC in day-to-day legal requirements.

"I welcome this opportunity to work with CUC and all the department heads and personnel who are giving so much to make CUC a successful utility," she said. *(Moneth G. Deposa)*

than retaining a private counsel.

Asked how the practice of hiring private counsels started, Buckingham said he could only speculate.

"My best guess is there's
See BUCKINGHAM on Page 4

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Acting Secretary, DCCA

Fernandez wanted graceful exit and payment for remaining term

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Fired Northern Marianas College president Dr. Carmen Fernandez wanted a graceful exit as well as payment for the remaining three years of her term at the helm of the CNMI's lone tertiary institution.

Even before the NMC Board or Regents decided on her fate during Monday night's hearing, highly placed sources said Fernandez's lawyer Atty. Brien Sers Nicholas wanted to make a deal with regents wherein her client would be given an opportunity to resign from her post to enable Fernandez to have a graceful exit.

Sers Nicholas also wanted the board to honor the remaining three years of Fernandez's contract with NMC.

Fernandez was originally approved a two-year contract as NMC president in 2007. The board then renewed and extended her term to four years from 2009-2012. Under the terms of that contract, she was to receive an \$80,000 annual pay and a monthly housing allowance of \$800.

The regents, however, went through with the vote Monday night and Fernandez was terminated in a vote of 4-3.

Her firing is effective 30 days upon receipt of the notice. She, however, will be paid her salary within the 30-day period.

Three members of the board expressed their opposition to terminate Fernandez. They included Charles Cepeda, Maria Malua Peter, and Elaine Orilla. Board chairwoman Janet Han King, vice chair Paz Younis, Frank Rabauliman, and Andrew Orsini voted to have her terminated.

General statements

Sources said during the hearing Sers Nicholas denied allegations—confirmed by the Attorney General's Office and NMC internal legal counsel Cabot Mantanona—that Fernandez intentionally changed several students' grades.

Saipan Tribune learned that AGO, which findings were merely classified as "documentative investigation," found probable cause that several students' grades were indeed intentionally changed by Fernandez.

Sources revealed that less than 20 students, some of whom already graduated from NMC, benefited from the "acts" committed by the president.

One of the grades that were changed dated back to an individual who graduated from NMC back in 2004. Fernandez assumed NMC's presidency only in 2007.

However, according to sources, Sers Nicholas failed to answer allegations directly and that his appeal was more of a "general statement."

The twin investigation made by the AGO and Cabot Mantanona revealed that changes in the students' grades reflected a higher rate than what were originally accorded by their instructors.

Sources disclosed that the improper act was raised to the attention of the board by concerned employees.

Saipan Tribune learned that the changing of grades were done—by not directly asking the

students' instructors—but on the general records of the college.

It was then disclosed that "accomplices" were called and admitted to the acts, even expressed willingness to cooperate and justify if there was a need to.

The investigation conducted by the internal legal counsel centered on how the "wrongful process" took place and who may have a hand in the act.

Reports filed by Cabot Mantanona indicated numerous interview accounts by several individuals.

She took her chances

Sources said regents already asked Fernandez to voluntarily

file a leave of absence even before she was suspended on allegations she changed students' grades last Jan. 12.

She, however, refused opting instead to ride the board's full action on the issue and take her chances.

A meeting was called on Jan.

12 where the new leadership of King adopted the suspension order by 4-3 votes, pending in-

See **FERNANDEZ** on next page

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Federal judge orders parties in lawsuit vs Fitial, Fund to file reports

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has ordered the parties in the lawsuit filed by two unnamed retired CNMI government employees against Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and the NMI Retirement Fund, over alleged non-payment of their retirement benefits, to file individual reports.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge Mark W. Bennett in his order issued on Friday directed the parties to file to the court the reports,

under seal, no later than Friday, April 16.

Bennett each report shall contain the number of times the parties have met since Jan. 25, 2010, in an effort to reach agreement on payment of the Superior Court judgment.

The judge said the report shall include the date of each meeting, the result of the meeting, the general nature of the current plan for payment of the judgment, and whether or not any demands or offers have been made and, if so, the specific terms of the most recent

demand or offer.

Bennett asked for information whether any parties have intervened in the Superior Court lawsuit and if so, the identities of the parties and their role in the negotiations.

Bennett sought for information whether or not the Superior Court has issued a deadline by which negotiations must be concluded and if so, that date.

Finally, the judge wanted information regarding the approximate amount owing on the judgment and accrued interest

as of the date of his order.

Bennett ordered that the stay previously entered by this court shall remain in effect until further court's order.

Attorney Bruce Jorgensen is representing the plaintiffs, whose identities have been withheld apparently due to their personal safety and for fear of retaliation and persecution.

Jorgensen asked the court, among other things, to issue a declaration holding CNMI Public Law 15-15 unlawful under U.S. law as violative of rights and protections guaranteed by

the U.S. Constitution.

P.L. 15-15 was signed into law by Fitial in June 2006. The law authorizes the suspension of CNMI payments owed to the Retirement Fund during a portion of the 2006 fiscal Year and during all of the 2007 calendar year.

Last Jan. 25, then federal court chief judge Alex Munson found compelling the arguments of the plaintiffs.

Munson, however, stayed the federal court proceedings in the lawsuit for 60 days to allow the parties more time

to negotiate in the Superior Court a realistic plan for timely payment of the \$230 million judgment.

On June 29, 2009, Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo ruled that the CNMI government owes the Fund \$231.6 million in damages and that the law suspending government contributions to the Fund is unconstitutional.

Govendo's ruling also sets the stage of negotiations to begin between the CNMI government and the Fund on how to pay the amounts owed.

SAIPAN

From Page 1

gallon on all gasoline products on Sunday midnight, and Mobil followed suit on Monday afternoon.

This came almost a month after Shell and Mobil hiked their

prices on March 14 and 16, respectively, marking the third round of price increases since the start of 2010.

Since February 2009, Saipan motorists have seen a total of at least \$1.15 a gallon increase in gas prices.

"Gas prices are a big problem... My \$20 can now buy me

only three to four days worth of gasoline. It used to last for two weeks," Sato told *Saipan Tribune* as he was filling his vehicle tank at the Mobil service station on Middle Road-Garapan yesterday morning.

Noel Legaspi, 35, said those earning a minimum wage of \$4.55 an hour will find it harder to

make ends meet, especially when gas prices continue to go up.

"When gas prices increase, that means less money to buy food and other basic needs," he said.

Legaspi, who has been working on Saipan as a restaurant wait staff for seven years, said he used to spend \$30 for at least a week of gasoline. Now, he

spends \$40 a week to fill up his car tank.

Mobil's self-serve unleaded gasoline is now \$3.879 a gallon, while self-serve super unleaded gasoline is now \$4.179 a gallon because of the 10-cent hike.

Full-serve products at Mobil service stations are as follows: Regular unleaded gasoline,

\$4.009 a gallon, and super unleaded gasoline, \$4.299 a gallon.

Diesel is now at \$4.049 a gallon.

Shell and Mobil do not issue advance notice of price increases. Saipan motorists know about such price changes by the price displays at gasoline service stations.

GOVERNMENT

From Page 1

lic Auditor concluded that the bid submitted by ITSI, the winning bidder for the project, was "responsive."

Newly sworn-in Public Works Secretary Martin Sablan said OPA's decision may finally start the long-overdue project.

Puerto Rico dump had been a source of water pollution for over 50 years on Saipan and its final closure is expected to greatly reduce the dump's adverse impacts on the surrounding ocean ecosystem.

It stopped receiving additional trash in 2003 when the \$10-million Marpi landfill opened, but seven years down the road, the final closure of the dump has yet to begin.

The GPPC counsel said the Procurement and Supply director violated the CNMI Procurement Regulations and the Department of Public Works' amended invitation for bids for the project when it received ITSI's bid.

"ITSI's bid should be disqualified as untimely," Hanson said.

The firm filed two protests with the Procurement and Supply, which denied the protest.

OPA affirmed the divisions' denial of the GPPC protest.

In GPPC's second protest filed with the Procurement and Supply, it said that although ITSI is the presumptive low bidder, ITSI's bid contained several "qualifications" in violation of procurement regulations.

Procurement and Supply also denied GPPC's second protest. OPA upheld the denial of the protest on April 1,

which forced GPPC to seek judicial review.

GPPC asked the court for a review of respondents' agency actions with regard to the receipt of ITSI's bid package and the opening of ITSI's bid package, as well as the respondents' refusal to reject ITSI's bid for the project "where such bid is in violation of the Procurement Regulations and, therefore, non-responsive."

GPPC also sought the court for "an order rejecting ITSI's bid for the project as untimely and/or non-responsive and a permanent injunction against any award of a contract for the project to ITSI."

Although OPA gave GPPC and other interested parties 10 days from April 1 to file a request for reconsideration of OPA's decision, GPPC chose to seek court action instead.

HATE

From Page 1

Chairwoman Janet Han King yesterday confirmed that she and her fellow board members have been receiving consistent hate e-mails—all relating to NMC's operations and board decisions.

She said the harassing communication all aim to harass and intimidate her—both in a personal capacity and as a member of the Board of Regents.

King said the frequency of

the hateful e-mails increased significantly since January, now totaling over 20 e-mails sent by anonymous senders, majority of whom use Gmail accounts.

The chairwoman described the messages as "vulgar" in nature and merits no attention from anyone.

She said she and the board will not in any way deal with "anonymous" mails.

King believes that the continued harassment, threat, and attack to the board is related to the first threat received by the college on

Jan. 11—a day prior to rendering the suspension order for fired president Dr. Carmen Fernandez.

It can be recalled that on that day, an e-mail message from an anonymous sender tried to stop the board of regents from conducting its scheduled meeting. This resulted to panic among students and faculty who were ordered by police officers to immediately vacate the facility because of the bomb threat.

King admitted that these hateful e-mails, including those attacking interim president Lorraine Cabrera, were all forwarded to the Federal Bureau of

Investigation.

The last "threat" e-mail sent to King was last Sunday, April 11.

'Mend the obvious rift'

King, in her message to all board members yesterday, expressed her gratitude to their participation in Monday's decision where they adopted to terminate the president.

She, however, admitted that there is an obvious rift among the board members that she wants to address.

It can be recalled that three of the four board of regents voted no to the decision, believing that

there are other options that the board can take rather than terminate Fernandez.

"Thank you for your participation in yesterday's important decision. The best thing about us is that we respect each other's decisions as being in the best interests of the students. There are a lot of reasons the board has to do the right thing: each and every student at NMC. The future of the CNMI rests with an educated community, and NMC is and will always be an important part in ensuring the successful future for all," she told the members.

King admitted to them that "there were some obstacles along the way, like hateful, hurtful, and outrageous emails and texts and messages from anonymous [cowards] sources and others."

"They worked hard to bully and discourage and threaten, especially personally. I am confident that nothing has distracted or affected you negatively to fulfill your roles and responsibilities as college regents. Thank you for your strength and fortitude... Truthfully, now our focus is to mend the obvious rift in the BOR, if possible. And to continue moving forward!" she added.

BURGLARS

From Page 1

was heavy.

The pastor said the suspects forcibly opened the doorknob on the exit door of the office using a screwdriver.

Rey said the screwdriver was left at the crime scene.

Rey said last October a burglar or burglars broke into their house and stole two laptop computers and jewelry, including his

wife's wedding ring.

The house is located next to the church.

Rey said Saipan is not a safe place to stay now that burglars even struck at a church.

"It only shows something. The fear of God is missing," the pastor said.

Burglars also struck recently in separate incidents at two rooms at Finasisu Terraces and stole laptop computers, jewelry, and other items. No one was arrested as of yesterday.

FERNANDEZ

From Page 3

vestigations to be conducted by the AGO and then newly hired Cabot Mantanona.

Saipan Tribune learned that it was then that Fernandez hired Atty. Sers Nicholas to be her private legal counsel to guide her throughout the suspension period.

Ready to face legal action

The board or regents said they are confident with their decision and ready to face any consequences brought about by their firing of Fernandez.

Regent Charles Cepeda, in a statement to *Saipan Tribune* said, "The action of the board to terminate the contract agreement with Dr. Fernandez is the

intent of moving forward to the best interest of the NMC. As a regent, I voted 'no' on the motion to terminate as I believe there are other options presented to the board which I thought is best for NMC."

The former chairman of the board added that the fact that the members deliberated on all options reflects the integrity of each member's me-

ticulousness in presenting his or her vote.

"It is time to move forward and start the process of selecting the next president for NMC. I urge everyone to be proud of our NMC graduates, students, faculty and staff and work together to ensure we meet WASC standards without reservations," Cepeda added.

BUCKINGHAM

From Page 2

some point in the past that an agency was not satisfied with the legal services they've got. They said 'why do we go ahead and retain our own counsel who

is accountable to us because we get better legal services.' Probably someone once said 'you know that takes some of the workload away from the Attorney General's Office so that's sounds like a good idea,'" Buckingham said.

The AG said it is understand-

able for the autonomous agencies to do that, but the problem with that is that it is not consistent with the constitution.

Asked by former judge Timothy Bellas how the OAG may deal with an autonomous agency like the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. whose lawyer

has many works, including collections, Buckingham answered with a premise that the government needs to follow the constitution.

"Then how you administer that is something that flows after we've been clear and in compliance with the constitution. So I

think it's one step at a time. And the first step is getting back into compliance with the constitutional provisions," he said.

Buckingham said in terms of fulfilling the duties of the OAG, they have the duty to represent the Commonwealth. "Because of the autonomous agency is-

sue, I don't believe that we are completely fulfilling that duty. What I want to do is work to get in compliance with the constitution," he stressed.

"This is something that is an issue for us and it's a priority and we are working on it," Buckingham added.

Chief prosecutor notes several deficiencies in Aldan's plea agreement

Chief Prosecutor Rosemond B. Santos said she found several deficiencies in the plea agreement that then assistant attorney general George Hasselback drafted in the case against Vicente T. Aldan.

In her declaration, Santos also pointed out that prior to filing a motion to set aside Aldan's plea agreement, Hasselback did not review the motion with her.

"Given its extraordinary nature and high profile, I was surprised of its filing and surprised that it was not reviewed and approved by me prior to filing," Santos said.

The chief prosecutor's declaration was attached to Attorney General Edward Buckingham's

motion on behalf of the government to withdraw the motion to set aside plea agreement.

Santos said she received from Buckingham a March 16, 2010 request for a case review related to Aldan's case.

Santos said subsequent to the request, she reviewed the case on two separate occasions and provided direction to Hasselback.

During her review, Santos said among the deficiencies she found in the plea agreement was that there was no time period within which Aldan had to produce the gun and surrender it.

The chief prosecutor said there was no statement about the

consequences that would follow the failure of the defendant to "surrender the firearm used in the commission of the crimes alleged in the information."

In contrast, Santos noted, there were penalties associated with Aldan's duty to perform community work service.

She said there was no duty on the part of Aldan to "retrieve" the firearm nor any acknowledgement by the defendant of knowledge or capacity to "surrender" the gun.

She said the plea agreement contained a sentence of six months that was to be served in its entirety without possibil-

ity of parole.

"This means the portions of the plea agreement that reference serving 'part or all of a suspended sentence' have no consequence," Santos said.

"These deficiencies represented learning opportunities for AAG Hasselback, a competent attorney but one who has less than one year experience as a prosecutor," Santos said.

The chief prosecutor said notwithstanding these deficiencies, Aldan currently stands convicted, is serving time and has a range of duties to fulfill after his sentence is completed.

Santos concluded that keeping

the existing conviction in force is better than losing the conviction and having the mere possibility of a future conviction with additional sentencing provisions.

The chief prosecutor said that on March 19 and 22 she communicated with Hasselback that he should withdraw his Feb.

2, 2010 motion to set aside the plea agreement.

Santos said she understood that Hasselback disagreed with her direction, but that she was clear to him about it (to withdraw).

Hasselback tendered his resignation on March 19, 2010.

"My direction to him on the Aldan case may have contributed to his resignation," Santos said. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

Former Senate journal clerk now Fitial's special assistant for programs, legislative review

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial appointed former Senate journal clerk Victoria T. Guerrero as his special assistant for programs and legislative review effective March

29 as part of a Cabinet revamp, *Saipan Tribune* learned.

Guerrero replaced Rose Ada-Hocog, who has been appointed as the governor's special assis-

tant for public liaison effective March 15.

Guerrero resigned as Senate journal clerk after House Speaker Froilan C. Tenorio (Cov-Saipan)

issued in February memos which included reassigning Guerrero to his office to serve as his special assistant. But Legislative Bureau Director Glenna SP. Reyes at that time did not grant Tenorio's request for the reassignment and demotion of five bureau employees.

Fitial said in starting his and Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos's second term as leaders, they must make decisions in taking the government in a direction best fitting the needs of the CNMI.

In a separate letter, Fitial thanked Ada-Hocog for serving as special assistant for programs and legislative review but said he believes that Ada-Hocog's skills and talents will be best served as special assistant for public liaison. *(Haidee V. Eugenio)*

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Rota: 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. – Téteto Beach

Zoning launches junk car removal program



From left, Zoning Board member Joe Limes, Triple Star Saipan manager Tony Reyes, Saipan Mayor Donald Flores, Zoning Board member Isidoro Cabrera, Basula Producto manager Eric Cruz, Zoning Board chair Herminia Fusco, and acting Zoning administrator Therese Ogomoro pose to mark the implementation of the junk car removal program.

By **WALTER J. SUTHERLAND**
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Starting yesterday, the public began seeing neon-colored violation stickers on junk cars throughout the community.

The Zoning Office is now implementing the island-wide junk vehicle removal program with the help of the Saipan Mayor's Office and two recycling com-

panies—Basula Producto and Saipan Triple Star.

Once a sticker is placed on a car, the owner will have 28 days to remove it themselves and avoid a fine from the Zoning Office. If a junk vehicle obstructs the right of way on a road, then the owner will have 48 hours to remove it themselves.

"I am very grateful that this program is finally beginning

because all of the junk vehicles present problems to the island's image. This program's implementation is long awaited for and we're going to ensure that these eyesores get removed as soon as possible in effort to instill back the beauty our island deserves," said Zoning Office acting administrator Therese Ogomoro.

Ogomoro encourages all owners of these vehicles to comply

with the notices to avoid stiff penalties and to visit or call the Zoning Office to obtain information for proper disposal.

"Owners should know that once a violation sticker is placed on their junk cars, time starts ticking and they should comply with the notice's time-frame. We'll give no exceptions...our island deserves to look beautiful and safe for our children, residents, and visitors as well," said Ogomoro.

Zoning Board chair Herminia Fusco said, "We intend to carry out this program as efficiently as possible with the public's co-operation. That is the only way that we can free island from all of these heaps of scrap metal. With the help of the Saipan Mayor and the two recycling companies, we should begin seeing changes to our island's image not too long from now."

Owners of junk car vehicles will be required to pay violation fines if they fail to remove their scrap vehicles. For more information, call the Zoning Office at 234-9661 or visit their location on the second floor of the Joeten Commercial Building in Dandan.

Saipan Rotary Club green-lights 18th year of youth cage league



Rotary Club of Saipan president Kim Forrester, second from left, presents a \$3,000 check donation to Basketball Association for the Northern Mariana Islands representative Gabriel White, third from left, for the 2010 season of the Rotary Club Youth Basketball League.

By **WALTER J. SUTHERLAND**
walter_sutherland@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Rotary Club of Saipan is continuing its commitment to

promoting youth sports with the start of the 18th season of the Rotary Club Youth Basketball League.

Yesterday morning during its weekly meeting at Hyatt Regency Saipan, club president Kim Forrester presented Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands representative Gabriel White with a \$3,000 check to help fund the league.

"The referees, coaches, and score table officials volunteer their services as a civic duty for the youth in the community and while we want to continue optimizing from such efforts, as the league continues to grow, so does all of its needs," said White.

Due to increases in fees and total costs of operation, the Rotary Club expressed that they will consider raising the donation amount next season. The club also requested for a league budget to be written up, in advance, for them to look over for next year.

With 18 teams and 300 participants from last year, the Rotary Club Youth Basketball League is the premier youth competition on island.

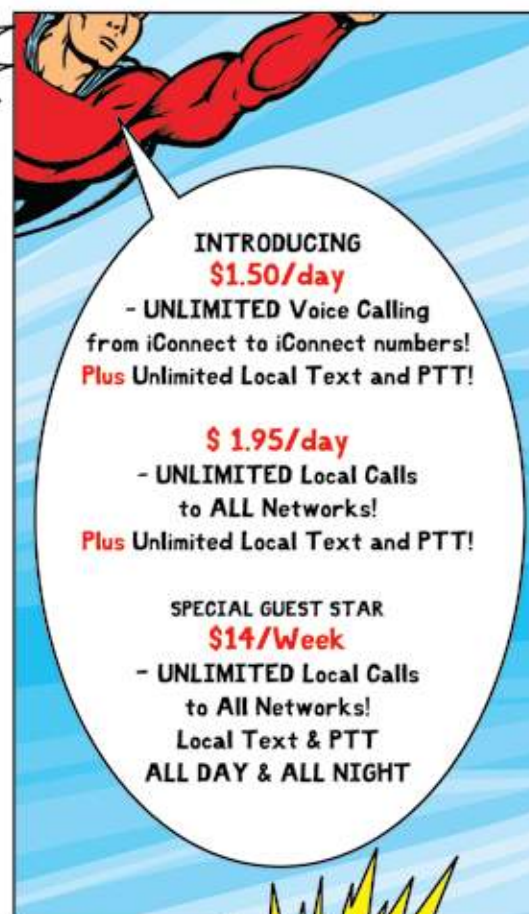
The league holds future aspirations of expansion to possibly offering a 14-and-under league as well as starting up a girls division. Although these ideas are being discussed, officially the league is still designed as a co-ed 18 and under league.

"The youth league is important because it keeps kids off the streets, away from drugs, and out of trouble. This program provides a safe and healthy environment for the kids and they all have a lot of fun," said White.

The RCYBL is administered by BANMI, which organizes the league schedules for the teams, referees, and score table officials.

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Rotary Club thanks Parade of Books sponsors

Standing by the international banners of Rotary Clubs, Chris Concepcion and Esther Sound of Delta Airlines smiled as they handed Saipan Rotary Club president Kim Forrester recently a \$3,000 check donation for the Club's annual literacy program, Parade of Books.

Delta Airlines has continually sponsored the program and raises its donation through its annual golf tournament, "Delta Air Lines Golf Tournament for Children's Education."

"We are grateful for Delta Airline's continues generosity for this worthwhile community program," said Forrester.

Held last March, the Parade of Books had 14 schools from all over the CNMI competing for cash prizes by interpreting their favorite book through a creative performance.

"We would like to thank our major sponsors for the Parade of Books and show our appreciation for making this one of the most successful community projects the Rotary Club of Saipan has had," said Forrester.

Kishiwada North Rotary Club also donated \$2,340 and Pacific Islands Club donated 30 water park passes for Best in Spirit Award and one PIC One Night Stay for Best Director.



Delta Airlines' Chris Concepcion, third from left, and Esther Sound, second from left, hand their company's \$3,000 check donation to the Saipan Rotary Club's annual literacy program, Parade of Books.

Freedom Air also donated two round trip tickets each for Rota and Tinian Elementary School team members. DFS Galleria assisted with the parade mascots, Triple J Super

Fresh Market donated five cases of water, and Marianas Variety News & Views donated

advertisements and posters.

"We would also like to thank Mr. Jim Feger of the Marianas High School Gym, the MHS Radio Club, MHS Productions, MHS Japan Ski Crew and the MHS National Honor Society members for their volunteer efforts and assistance," said Forrester. "Thank you to all of our volunteer Rotary Club of Saipan members as well for your tireless efforts—this is a great example of service above self."

The 2010 Parade of Books was sponsored by Delta Airlines, Kishiwada North Rotary Club, Pacific Islands Club, DFS Galleria, Triple J Super Fresh Market, Marianas Variety News & Views, and Freedom Air. (PR)

Joeten-Kiyu celebrates National Library Week

It's National Library Week, a time to celebrate the contributions of libraries, librarians, and library workers in schools, campuses, and communities nationwide.

"Libraries are the heart of every community and our library helps our community thrive. At our library, people of all backgrounds come together," said JKPL Executive Director John "Bolis" DLR. Gonzales.

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library is celebrating National Library Week by offering a range of services, activities, and classes to our community, including:

■ Amnesty week—JKPL will waive late fines for registered patrons for any long overdue library materials returned in good condition during this week.

■ The information Technology Center (ITC) will offer classes on resume and power point build up.

■ The homework center (HC) will offer different homework and academic activities.

■ The children of our Homeland Cultural Center (COHCL) will be having a Read Aloud

and featured book and author displays after school from Tuesday to Friday.

The bookmobile will continue its regular outreach library and homework assistance services offsite at various villages as scheduled (please see attached).

Various partner agencies will also showcase and disseminate information on programs and services for our community.

On Saturday, April 17, from 8am to 12pm, JKPL will be capping off its celebration with a family fun day mini carnival-games, free giveaways, exhibits, recognition of benefactors, and open house tour.

First sponsored in 1958, National Library Week is a national observance sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and libraries across the country every April.

For more information, visit the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, call 235-7322 or access the library's website at <http://www.cnmlibrary.com>. Library hours are Tuesday-Friday 9am-5pm; Saturday 9am-4pm. (PR)

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
P.O. Box 502149, Saipan MP 96950
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 Email: administration@cda.gov.mp • website: www.cda.gov.mp

PUBLIC NOTICE
 April 13, 2010

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Board of Directors of the Development Corporation Division (DCD) of the Commonwealth Development Authority thru its Chairwoman, hereby informs the general public that the DCD Board of Directors will meet on Saturday, April 17, 2010 at 9:00 A.M. The meeting will be held at the CDA Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Wakin's Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Saipan. The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

AGENDA

- I. **PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
 1. Roll Call
- II. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
- III. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**
 1. December 17, 2009
- IV. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- V. **REPORTS**
 1. Financial Report – DCD
 2. Loan Reports
 - a. Loan Applications' Report
 - b. Approved Loans & Bank Guarantees' Report
 - c. Loan Status/Receivables Report
 - d. DCD Performing Loan Summary/Delinquency & Litigation Reports
- VI. **OLD BUSINESS**
- VII. **NEW BUSINESS**
 1. New Loan Request
 2. Other Requests
- VIII. **OTHER MATTERS**
- IX. **ADJOURNMENT**

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session)

/s/ **MARCIE M. TOMOKANE**
 Chairwoman, CDA Board of Directors

COMMONWEALTH DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
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 Email: administration@cda.gov.mp • website: www.cda.gov.mp

PUBLIC NOTICE
 April 13, 2010

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Board of Directors of the Commonwealth Development Authority thru its Chairman, hereby informs the general public that the CDA Board of Directors will hold its regular meeting on Friday, April 16, 2010 at 10:00 A.M. The meeting will be held at the CDA Conference Room, Second Floor, Wakin's Building, Chalan Pale Arnold Road, Saipan. The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

AGENDA

- I. **PRELIMINARY MATTERS**
 1. Roll Call
 2. Adoption of Agenda
 3. Adoption of Minutes
 - a. January 27, 2010
- II. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
- III. **REPORTS**
 1. Financial Report - CDA
 2. Legal Counsel's Report
- IV. **DIVISIONS/COMMITTEES**
 1. Administrative Matters/Personnel & Budget
 - a. CDA Board Resolution 2009-003
 - b. FY 2011 Budget
 - c. Personnel Matters
 2. Development Corporation Division (DCD)
 3. DBD/Public Finance Committee
 4. QC Program/Economic Development Activities
 - a. World Corporation d.b.a. World Resort Saipan
 - b. WDI Saipan, Inc.
 - c. Other QC Matters
- V. **OLD BUSINESS**
 1. Pacific Islands Development Bank (PIDB)
 2. Small Business Development Center (SBDC) – Update
 3. Business Incubator - Update
- VI. **NEW BUSINESS**
 1. APAFS – Sponsorship of Country Conference
- VII. **OTHER MATTERS**
- VIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

All interested persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the above agenda items. (Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)(7) and Section 13(c), the Board may vote to meet in executive session)

/s/ **PEDRO I. ITIBUS**
 Chairman, CDA Board of Directors

SHIPPING SCHEDULE



Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD P. Kelang	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung	ETD Naha
MELL SILOSO	002E	4/3 Sat	4/1 Thu	4/1 Thu	3/30 Tue	3/27 Sat	4/9 Fri	4/5 Mon	4/4 Sun	3/28 Sun	3/28 Sun	4/5 Mon	4/9 Fri	4/11 Sun	4/13 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	036E	4/10 Sat	4/8 Thu	4/8 Thu	4/6 Tue	4/3 Sat	4/16 Fri	4/12 Mon	4/11 Sun	4/4 Sun	4/4 Sun	4/12 Mon	4/16 Fri	4/18 Sun	4/20 Tue
MELL SPRINGLEAF	002E	4/17 Sat	4/15 Thu	4/15 Thu	4/13 Tue	4/10 Sat	4/23 Fri	4/19 Mon	4/18 Sun	4/11 Sun	4/11 Sun	4/19 Mon	4/23 Fri	4/25 Sun	4/27 Tue
MELL SILOSO	003E	4/24 Sat	4/22 Thu	4/22 Thu	4/20 Tue	4/17 Sat	4/30 Fri	4/26 Mon	4/25 Sun	4/18 Sun	4/18 Sun	4/26 Mon	4/30 Fri	5/2 Sun	5/4 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	037E	5/1 Sat	4/29 Thu	4/29 Thu	4/27 Tue	4/24 Sat	5/7 Fri	5/3 Mon	5/2 Sun	4/25 Sun	4/25 Sun	5/3 Mon	5/7 Fri	5/9 Sun	5/11 Tue
MELL SPRINGLEAF	003E	5/8 Sat	5/6 Thu	5/6 Thu	5/4 Tue	5/1 Sat	5/14 Fri	5/10 Mon	5/9 Sun	5/2 Sun	5/2 Sun	5/10 Mon	5/14 Fri	5/16 Sun	5/18 Tue

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETA Saipan	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA Davao	ETA GenSan	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Yokohama	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
MELL SILOSO	002E	4/17 Sat	4/18 Sun	4/18 Sun	4/20 Tue	4/21 Wed	4/23 Fri	4/25 Sun	SKIP	4/30 Fri	5/1 Sat	5/6 Thu	5/25 Tue	5/9 Sun
MELL SENTOSA	036E	4/24 Sat	4/25 Sun	4/25 Sun	SKIP	4/28 Wed	4/30 Fri	5/2 Sun	SKIP	5/7 Fri	5/8 Sat	5/13 Thu	6/1 Tue	5/16 Sun
MELL SPRINGLEAF	002E	5/1 Sat	5/2 Sun	5/2 Sun	5/4 Tue	5/5 Wed	5/7 Fri	5/9 Sun	SKIP	5/14 Fri	5/15 Sat	5/20 Thu	6/8 Tue	5/23 Sun
MELL SILOSO	003E	5/8 Sat	5/9 Sun	5/9 Sun	SKIP	5/12 Wed	5/14 Fri	5/16 Sun	SKIP	5/21 Fri	5/22 Sat	5/27 Thu	6/15 Tue	5/30 Sun
MELL SENTOSA	037E	5/15 Sat	5/16 Sun	5/16 Sun	5/18 Tue	5/19 Wed	5/21 Fri	5/23 Sun	SKIP	5/28 Fri	5/29 Sat	6/3 Thu	6/22 Tue	6/6 Sun
MELL SPRINGLEAF	003E	5/22 Sat	5/23 Sun	5/23 Sun	SKIP	5/26 Wed	5/28 Fri	5/30 Sun	SKIP	6/4 Fri	6/5 Sat	6/10 Thu	6/29 Tue	6/13 Sun

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CPA demands information on CBP plan at Saipan airports

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
Moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority wants specific information on the plan of the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection at Francisco C. Ada-Saipan International Airport, in relation to the federal takeover of the local immigration system on island.

CPA executive director Edward DeLeon Guerrero, in his letter to Department of Public Works Secretary Martin Sablan, admitted that the ports authority has no clue what projects the federal agency is planning at the airport.

CPA indicated that it received a letter from CBP requesting for variance to building code to allow automatic sprinkler system at the airport site.

DeLeon Guerrero said that it is very important that the agency is fully aware of any CBP projects at its property.

Saipan Tribune learned that all negotiations pertaining to the request of CBP were referred to the governor's special legal counsel Howard Willens.

"The CPA has absolutely no knowledge on CBP's proposed projects...and it is probably equally true that no communication about the projects was sent to the governor's special legal counsel who was assigned to deal with CBP matters at the airports," DeLeon Guerrero indicated in his letter to DPW secretary.

Because of this, CPA officials requested a meeting with DPW to clear the issue about CBP's projects.

Yesterday, DPW Secretary Martin C. Sablan confirmed his meeting with CPA people.

He revealed that CBP has only inquired at DPW as far as building code is concerned.

He said no permit has been granted to the federal agency to date.

Sablan disclosed that CBP people will be on island next week to meet with CPA officials and discuss its renovation project at the airport.

He said CBP was made aware that DPW's involvement only deals with the building code requirements but as far as what type of projects to be built in the airport, CPA is the authorized agency because it owns the airport facility.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy birthday to Tess Pineda, who will celebrate her special day tomorrow, May 15. Greetings from your friends at Saipan Palms Resort

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

April 14, 1999

HANMI assails taxes in paper

The Hotel Association of Northern Mariana Islands has submitted to the legislature an eight-point proposal that will help revitalize the Northern Marianas economy, which include investment promotion and ensuring government efficiency. In a position paper submitted to House Speaker Diego T. Benavente and Senate President Paul Manglona, HANMI said the CNMI government must reduce instead of increasing the taxes on businessmen on the island to help them compete and survive amid the economic crisis. "As a community, we must seek ways to stimulate job creation and reinvestment, this cannot be accomplished in an environment of increasing taxes," said HANMI.

There's no stopping the benefits law now

Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio said yesterday that regulations that would implement a law providing additional compensation to local residents are now ready. But the governor said residents would have to wait for another two to three months before they could receive the benefits intended for employees whose hourly wages are still below the US minimum of \$5.15. The other day Labor and Immigration Secretary Mark D. Zachares and acting Attorney General Maya Kara signed the guidelines that would give flesh to the fair compensation act. The regulations will be published in the Commonwealth Registry to solicit comments from the public. Details of the implementing regulations were not provided to the media.

April 14, 2000

Economic difficulties hinder \$60M bond float

Economic difficulties and higher prevailing interest rates are obstructing the prompt flotation of the tax-exempt \$60 million municipal bond, which drag the completion of major infrastructure projects in the Northern Marianas. Development Authority Board Chair John S. Tenorio said the government had to postpone the flotation of the municipal bond from March to June 2000 due to the higher interest rate prevailing in the U.S. market. Mr. Tenorio said interest rates normally increase by 30 basis points or by one percent during the March-May period, adding that floating the \$60 million bond this time would only stress the Commonwealth's depleting coffers.

BOE wants discretionary power over PSS CIP funds

Education officials yesterday scorched actions taken by some members of the Legislature regarding measures that were introduced and passed despite the absence of consultation meetings with the Board. At the same time, members of the Board of Education stressed that the Public School System be given discretionary authority in expending funds for school-related capital infrastructure projects in order to arrest snags in its prompt completion. During its regular monthly meeting yesterday, members of the education board noted a series of legislative measures introduced by the House committee on education that were not consulted with them.

April 14, 2003

NMC's ADB proposed loan falls through

The Northern Marianas College's proposed \$26-million loan with the Asian Development has failed, according to NMC president Kenneth E. Wright. Wright, however, said that a new opportunity arose, this time with the International Monetary Fund, which, he said, is interested "when the college gets started" with its expansion program. On ADB, he said, the loan would not materialize due to "differences" in goals. "It's not possible, not at the moment. They have objectives, we have objectives, and maybe there's an area where there's enough overlap that would make some sense. But their objective is different from ours."

CHC proposer's appeal denied

The Division of Procurement and Supply has denied-again-the appeal of Casa Felipe, whose bid to supply the Commonwealth Health Center with nursing staff was earlier rejected by the same division. Department of Public Health risk manager Nancy Gottfried said that Casa Felipe is now appealing its case with the Office of the Public Auditor. "Procurement upheld its earlier decision and the appeal is now with the OPA," she said. With the appeal pending, Gottfried said the P&S and the DPH cannot award any contract pending the OPA review of the case. "Right now, we're still evaluating all proposals. We can't move without OPA's decision." Out of the original eight proposers, the P&S now has six pending CHC proposals to evaluate.



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INVITATION FOR BID PSS IFB 10-023

"Laptops and Desktop Computers for William S. Reyes Elementary School (WSR)"

The Public School System and the State Board of Education are soliciting competitive sealed bids for the purchase of **Laptops and Desktop Computers for William S. Reyes Elementary School (WSR)**. The Scope of Work is available beginning April 7, 2010 at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the CNMI Retirement Fund building, Capitol Hill, Saipan MP 96950. Fax request may be sent to 664.3791.

Questions must be in writing and addressed to Robert Florian, Procurement Officer via fax at (670) 664-3791 or e-mailed to the following address: robert.florian@cnmipss.org

Bids must be placed in a sealed envelope marked "IFB 10-023" containing one(1) original with Three(3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement & Supply Office situated on the 3rd Floor of the CNMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **April 21, 2010, at 10:00 a.m.** at which time bids, will be publicly opened. Any bids received after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted.

/s/ **Rita A. Sablan, Ed.D.**
Commissioner of Education

/s/ **Robert Florian**
Procurement & Supply Officer



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



INVITATION FOR BID CUC-IFB-10-021

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting sealed bids from qualified individuals or firms for the urgent supply of major overhaul and limited running parts for MITSUI #1 OVERHAUL project at Rota Power Plant CNMI.

Emergency generator sets will be used to power the island of Rota, while CUC takes down MITSUI #1 for major engine overhaul and rehabilitation. MITSUI #1 is seriously overdue for overhaul and the power situation on Rota is very critical.

A site visit and pre-bid meeting is not necessary, but bidders who wish to visit Rota power plant will be permitted with prior approval. All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on part of the proposers due to a lack of information or understanding of the plant site conditions in the course of the Contractor's preparation of a bid or performance of work under the contract.

The Scope-of-Work and Bid package will be **e-mailed** upon request, to all interested bidders, by the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), Monday thru Friday, except government observed holidays, **until Monday, March 29, 2010.**

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a seal envelope marked **"IFB 10-021 MITSUI#1 OVERHAUL PARTS"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, Room No. 4, 3rd Floor Joeten Dandan, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan MP 96950, no later than **Wednesday, April 07, 2010 at 10:00 AM**, local time, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

Local Bidders (CNMI based business) will be required to submit a copy of a CNMI Business License upon notice of award of contract. Off-island Bidders (Non-CNMI based business) are excluded from the requirement of submitting a copy of a CNMI Business license upon notice of award of contract.

The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations. CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

All inquires must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM local time on **Friday, April 2, 2010** to Mr. Manuel B. Sablan, Jr., Purchasing Officer via email at msablan@cucgov.net and Mr. Wallon Young, Deputy Director Power System Rehabilitation via email at wallon59@yahoo.com.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Acting Executive Director



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director



ADDENDUM NO. 1

INVITATION FOR BIDS

CUC-IFB-10-021

March 31, 2010

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is extending the bid due date for CUC-IFB-10-021, to **April 21, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.** local time.

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a seal envelope marked **"IFB 10-021 MITSUI#1 OVERHAUL PARTS"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, Room No.4, 3rd Floor Joeten Dandan, P.O.Box 501220, Saipan MP 96950, no later than **Wednesday, April 21, 2010 at 10:00 AM**, local time, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government.

All inquires must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM local time on **Friday, April 2, 2010** to Mr. Manuel B. Sablan, Jr., Procurement & Supply Manager via email at msablan@cucgov.net and Mr. Wallon Young, Deputy Director Power System Rehabilitation via email at wallon59@yahoo.com.

ANTONIO S. MUNA
Executive Director



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-10-022

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting sealed bids from qualified individuals or firms for the urgent supply 3-PHASE TRANSFORMERS.

Emergency generator sets will be used to power the island of Rota, while CUC takes down existing generator sets for major engine overhaul and rehabilitation. All existing engines already overdue for overhauls and the power situation on Rota is very critical.

A site visit and pre-bid meeting is not planned, but bidders who wish to visit Rota power plant will be permitted with prior approval. All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on part of the proposers due to a lack of information or understanding of the plant site conditions in the course of the Contractor's preparation of a bid or performance of work under the contract.

The Scope-of-Work and Bid package will be **e-mailed** upon request, to all interested bidders, by the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, during working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), Monday thru Friday, except government observed holidays, **until Wednesday, March 31, 2010.**

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a seal envelope marked **"IFB 10-022 ROTA 3-PHASE TRANSFORMERS"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, Room No. 4, 3rd Floor Joeten Dandan, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan MP 96950, no later than **Thursday, April 08, 2010 at 10:00 AM**, local time, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

Local Bidders (CNMI based business) will be required to submit a copy of a CNMI Business License upon notice of award of contract. Off-island Bidders (Non-CNMI based business) are excluded from the requirement of submitting a copy of a CNMI Business license upon notice of award of contract.

With respect to bidders' employment of labor as an element of a bid, the Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page — <http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/cnmi/cnmi.htm>. The contractor will also be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations. CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

All inquires must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM local time on **Monday, April 05, 2010** to Mr. Manuel B. Sablan, Jr., Purchasing Officer via email at msablan@cucgov.net and Mr. Wallon Young, Deputy Director Power System Rehabilitation via email at wallon59@yahoo.com.

/s/ ABE UTU MALAE
Acting Executive Director



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

Office of the Executive Director



ADDENDUM NO. 1

INVITATION FOR BIDS

CUC-IFB-10-022

March 31, 2010

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is extending the bid due date for CUC-IFB-10-022, to **April 22, 2010 at 10:00 a.m.**, local time.

One (1) original and five (5) copies must be submitted in a seal envelope marked **"IFB 10-022 ROTA 3-PHASE TRANSFORMERS"** to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, Room No.4, 3rd Floor Joeten Dandan, P.O.Box 501220, Saipan MP 96950, no later than **Thursday, April 22, 2010 at 10:00 AM**, local time, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the interest of the government.

All inquires must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM local time on **Monday, April 05, 2010** to Mr. Manuel B. Sablan, Jr., Procurement & Supply Manager via email at msablan@cucgov.net and Mr. Wallon Young, Deputy Director Power System Rehabilitation via email at wallon59@yahoo.com.

ANTONIO S. MUNA
Executive Director

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XX, Issue No. 88Published daily at 2/F JP Centre,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR
Mark Rabago ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER

AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

The virtues of a US-Russia deal

The United States and Russia have moved far beyond the fierce, high-stakes hostility that characterized the Cold War years. But in recent years, relations between the two governments have often been irritable and uncooperative. So it's a pleasant surprise to find President Barack Obama and President Dmitry Medvedev reaching accord on a plan for reducing their nuclear arsenals.

Being able to work with the Russians on this issue may be good practice for addressing other ones, such as Iran and North Korea. Thawing the chill in relations that took place under President George W. Bush is a good step toward finding common ground instead of reasons to bicker.

But the treaty, which Obama and Medvedev signed Thursday, is also good for several other reasons. The first is that it brings about a useful shrinkage of stockpiles that are far larger than either side needs. Under the New START, each would be allowed 1,550 nuclear warheads and 700 delivery vehicles (meaning missiles and bombers).

On paper, that represents a cut of 30 percent from current levels. But the change is exaggerated. In reality, the United States will have to eliminate only about 100 warheads, compared to 190 for the Russians.

Most of the "cuts" reflect revisions in the way weapons are counted. Still, even modest reductions are worth making, given the vast overkill maintained in either country.

Equally important, the accord renews and expands the system of verification established under the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which expired in December. The reporting and inspection regime will assure that Washington knows the number and location of Moscow's long-range nukes, in the event that the Russians were inclined to cheat on the deal.

Conservatives worried that the administration would give in to Russian demands to give up missile defense plans. But the treaty includes no limits on missile defense for the simple reason that Obama refused to accept them and Medvedev finally dropped the idea. That outcome should greatly improve the chances of ratification by the Senate.

Perhaps the real significance of the agreement, though, is that it gives the United States greater credibility in trying to prevent nuclear proliferation. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty obliges non-nuclear signatories not to acquire the bomb, but it also requires the existing nuclear powers to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament."

It's hard to tell others about the need to curb the spread of nukes if you're not meeting your responsibility to reduce your own armaments. When the NPT review conference takes place in New York next month, the U.S. will have more credibility in stressing the need to keep Iran from getting nuclear weapons.

At best, New START represents a modest advance for U.S.-Russia relations and control of nuclear weapons. But it beats the heck out of moving backward.

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Investors and us

On everybody's wish list is the dream that dozens of investors will swoop into the CNMI dressed in shining white armor as saviors of our destitute islands. As they charge down the streets spreading their money, we the poor gentry bow our heads in adoration and genuflect that help has arrived. No longer will we be hungry. No longer will we have to work. No longer will we have to beg. Money will soon flow like water in the streets. Hooray for the investors!

Ah, yes, investors and more investors. That is the way to build our economy again. But... Then slowly we wake up. Our heads feel like a hangover from a previous night of revelry. As we look around, we ask: What happened? Why is our economy in the hands of outsiders? Why aren't our people employed at decent wages? Where are all the good times we envisioned? Where did we go wrong?

An investor is an individual or a group that is seeking to earn the highest return on his investment. He has to have certain conditions or he will not commit his money and time. He is like a butterfly seeking the sweetest nectar from any flower he can find. When the flower begins to wilt he will leave for fresher flowers. As long as the nectar keeps flowing he stays.

Along with all of you, I too wish for investors to come and invest in our islands and create a prosperous economy. But there is one vital catch. Our people must be employed in these enterprises. If we are not, we will be as children standing outside a bakery shop looking through the window smelling all the goodies inside but not being able to go inside and enjoy them.

When an investor comes knocking does anyone request them to train and employ our people? Also We are so locked into using outside non-resident workers to do everything for us. Somehow we have been mesmerized with the idea that the investor with his money and the non-resident worker with his willingness to work for a meager salary are the happy combinations for our prosperity. As a result, we have miserably failed to create a local skilled labor force that can become a part of any investor project. Meanwhile the line at the food stamp office gets longer.

What do we have to offer the investor that will add to his investment plan and to our community? Scenery alone will not do it. The rest of the world is beautiful also. The more educated and skilled workforce we offer, the more we become partners with investors.

The world is changing and unless we understand that change and adapt to it. We will be left behind. Our children and neighbors will

By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO
Special to the Saipan Tribune



Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.

continue to leave the islands as they have already started to. We must stop relying upon outsiders to do our work for us.

Let me quote several extracts from a keynote address delivered by the Prime Minister of Malaysia at a forum in 2004. His remarks crystallize the very essence of the importance of training our people if we are ever to develop a strong and sustainable economy in the CNMI:

"As I understand it, human development is development that is centered on the human person. It is ultimately aimed at improving the human person's welfare in all its dimensions, and enabling him to fulfill his full potential and his great aspirations....Ultimately, the intangible assets of a knowledge based economy resides in the hearts and minds of our people. It is for this reason that I firmly believe that the foundational drivers of a nation's economy lie with its human resource capital...."

"Ordinary people are the center of knowledge creation and innovation. Our people are truly our greatest resource and asset. Whether they are in the smallest companies or the highest levels of government, people are the building blocks of all that we do—and it is imperative that we recognize this. Machines can be fixed, restructured; however, the success or failure of any endeavor is still largely dependent on the people involved.

It is the people who do the thinking and planning; people who execute and implement; people who build and develop industries. In short, it is people who advance nations....In order to make investments in technology, a country must have a sufficient human capital. Human capital is the formal education, training and on-the-job learning embodied in the populace. Countries that have encouraged their people through education and lifelong learning...are well positioned to take advantages of these now global

See **INVESTORS** on Page 13

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Tales from the Walt Vault: The funny things that customers do #1

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

Online Customers

Now, don't get me wrong. Before I start roasting my customers, I must tell you: I LOVE my customers! I couldn't be enjoying my nomadpreneur freedom here on Saipan without customers. Customers are the lifeblood of business. Customers determine what I sell, and offer me the feedback that lets me know I'm living my life on purpose. Customers are great! Okay?

Ahem. With that said, however, I've also learned that sometimes customers are craaaazy!! And, I say that with all the love and compassion I can muster. Let me give you some examples of some of my online customers' funny behavior. (And by funny, I mean "strange" funny, not "ha-ha" funny!)

Read, Mary, READ!!

Right before I escaped to Saipan, I started a website called www.FreeSummerConcerts.com which lists, as the name might imply, all the free concerts in New York City for the summer.

Now, the word "free" is mentioned 23 times on the site, 11 more times on the "Thank you" page, eight more times in the confirmation email, four more times on the confirmation screen after you confirm, and another eight or 10 times in the welcome email! Not only that, the second line of text on the website reads: "For six years, our FREE service has been YOUR resource for New York's Summer of Free Music, Dance and Spoken Word events!"

So, yesterday, I received an email from a subscriber which read: "Dear sir, Can you please confirm that there is no charge for the freesummer concerts list?"

Of course, being the maven of customer service that I am, I politely replied, "Yes, "Mary," it's absolutely free!" refraining from any mention of, or calling into question Mary's reading comprehension abilities.

Fearful Frank and a tale of buyer's remorse

A few weeks ago, another website visitor, "Frank," purchased a paperback copy of my book, *Turn Your Passion Into Profit*, from my website. Now, even before the order was successfully placed, Frank had experienced difficulty using the login feature of the shopping cart when first attempting to purchase, so I had to interact with him personally once via phone, and again via email, just before his purchase. So, when I saw that his order had successfully completed, I sent him another personal email congratulating him, and telling him we'd process the order right away.

Frank responded:

Of \$4,200 stipend per month

The \$4,200 monthly stipend per legislator (six of them) from the two senatorial districts is a luxury item need not pay right smack in the middle of the toughest financial crisis. It pans out to \$50,400 per year per lawmaker or \$302,400 annually on top of their salaries. In reality, each is receiving about \$89,900 per year. No wonder these folks don't seem adversely affected by the deepening economic slump.

Yes, it's time the stipend is reduced to \$20 a day. This measure must be translated into a statutory mandate. Please cease and desist from your daily picnics while a majority of taxpayers from Saipan salivate at the luxury given to you. Be a part of the solution rather than sport a fully honed innocent face. Don't worry that Speaker Lang is probing this issue. You can insert the spin "interference." But he represents the largest group of taxpayers being turned into your milking cows even when the pasture is parched brown.

This luxury item as employees throughout the NMI Government must deal with the likelihood of reduction in force or work hour reduction. This luxury item as those who would be terminated struggle to answer how would they pay for the first family home. This luxury item as they grind down to zero sum to meet the basic needs of their families. Enough is enough!

Tinian and Rota Casinos

There has been budgetary allotment handed to the Tinian Gaming Commission in recent past. An appropriation may be moving in both chambers to assist the Rota casino commission. These funds come from the general fund. Perhaps it is seed funding for purposes of set-

hello walt,
glad that my order finally went through but please give me something a little more specific than we'll get on it right away. when can I expect my book to go out and how will it be shipped? Looking forward to your response being as timely as your advertising since you've already collected my money.

Just a few minutes later, Frank sent another email

Walt.....Just noticed an extra \$5 fee added to the cost of my book that was not there when I placed my order. I'm going to trust that you will get back to me quickly on this as I'm starting to get a not so good feeling about this whole transaction. And please again....what does "at the first possible opportunity" mean when referring to my shipping date? Any chance of undoing this whole thing? Frank

I sent a polite and understanding email to Frank and explained what a shipping charge was, assured him that it had been there quite visible during the checkout process (which he could check on his own), referred to my almost 20-year untarnished business history without complaint or blemish from the Better Business Bureau, and letting him know that his order had already shipped, but that I could refund his money at any time if he so chose. Frank apparently received the assurance he required, and I haven't heard from him since. This was about two weeks ago.

But, here's what stands out to me as unusual about this whole exchange. From the very beginning, Frank was receiving personalized attention from me (99 percent of my customers complete their book orders without speaking directly with the author of the book!), but still had doubts in his mind about the legitimacy of the process

The \$5 shipping charge is clearly itemized throughout the checkout process. I can't recall anyone in the 18 years I've been selling via mail order, or the 10 years I've been selling online, who has questioned a "mysteriously appearing" shipping charge. I wanted to ask Frank what planet he'd been living on, but decided to be nice.

Frank still felt "buyer's remorse" and wanted to cancel his order, even though he had had the unusual experience of speaking with a live person through the entire process!

It wouldn't surprise me if, later, Frank asks for a refund. (I think Frank has trust issues that have nothing to do with me.)

[If you want to see the full exchange between me and Frank, and the "polite and understanding" response I sent to him, check out a copy of *The Turn Your Passion Into Profit Websites that Sell Manual* at www.passionprofit.com]

These are just two of the recent examples of the funny things that customers do!

What I've learned about my online customers

Anyway, on a serious note, the point is this: In all my years doing business online, I've learned a few things about internet customer human nature that help me continue to make sales, create good karma, and grow my businesses as well as those of my clients. Here are just a few that may help you with your online venture:

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT

Creating economic success for the CNMI

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

■ *X People are busy (or illiterate). So, don't expect that they have time (or the ability) to read everything, which brings us to point #2:*

■ *X People won't always fully read their emails or all the great, valuable information you've painstakingly placed on your websites. You may have to repeat certain information several times even though it is clearly visible on your site or in your emails.*

■ *X People don't share the same level of technical expertise when it comes to surfing, purchasing or even communicating online. There are still many new people who don't know how to send an email, or who will write their email addresses as www.walt@passionprofit.com or some strange variation of this.*

■ *X People want what they order "now." If they can't get it now, they'd like it sooner than later. So, if your product is normally delivered in three days, advertise that it will take five. That way they'll be surprised when it comes sooner.*

■ *X People live in fear. They suspect that you are an online scam artist. Anything you do to allay those fears will help build trust and sales (unless you happen to get "Frank" as a customer)*

■ *X People think that money is the most important thing for you, too. Let them know that you are not starving for their business, will gladly give refunds, and may even refuse their business for a given reason.*

Stay tuned for these and other puzzling and perplexing tales of customer behavior from the Walt Vault!

■ ■ ■

Note: Fans and followers of the books, *Chicken Feathers* and *Garlic Skin: Diary of a Chinese Garment Factory Girl on Saipan* may order on Amazon.com

Note: Ever wanted to direct your friends and family to a set of websites that revealed the best things about Saipan? Do what I do: send them to www.bestofsaipan.com!

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!—Walt

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 16 books including *Turn Your Passion Into Profit*. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here on Saipan. To learn more, visit www.passionprofit.com and follow Walt on Twitter (waltonsaipan).

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.

Special to the Saipan Tribune

Delrosario is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section



but hard for mayors to fathom. "Gov., I honestly need to have every single one of my staff for next year."

"But where would you get the money to pay them?" "Oh, we will charge fees for stray dogs caught at night."

"Stray dogs without owners; who then do you charge?"

"Wow! Wow! Wow!, Grrrr! Grrrr! Grrrr! (Laughter)."

"We will discourage any and all cattle rustling scheme back home."

"Great! Otherwise, start selling cowboy hats!"

"We'll use our broken pick-up, but can you buy gas?"

"Yes, one gallon a week. Work stations are at the office not public roads."

"How about money for trips up north?"

"There's nobody up there; why do you want to go?"

"What about travel outside the NMI?"






"It's strictly for medical referral patients!"

Ooops! Chamorro Logic, even at its ridiculous best didn't work, huh?

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 76°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲ 86 ▼ 77
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 88 ▼ 78
Yap	Showers	▲ 88 ▼ 78
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	▲ 88 ▼ 80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 79
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 86 ▼ 79
Majuro	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 80

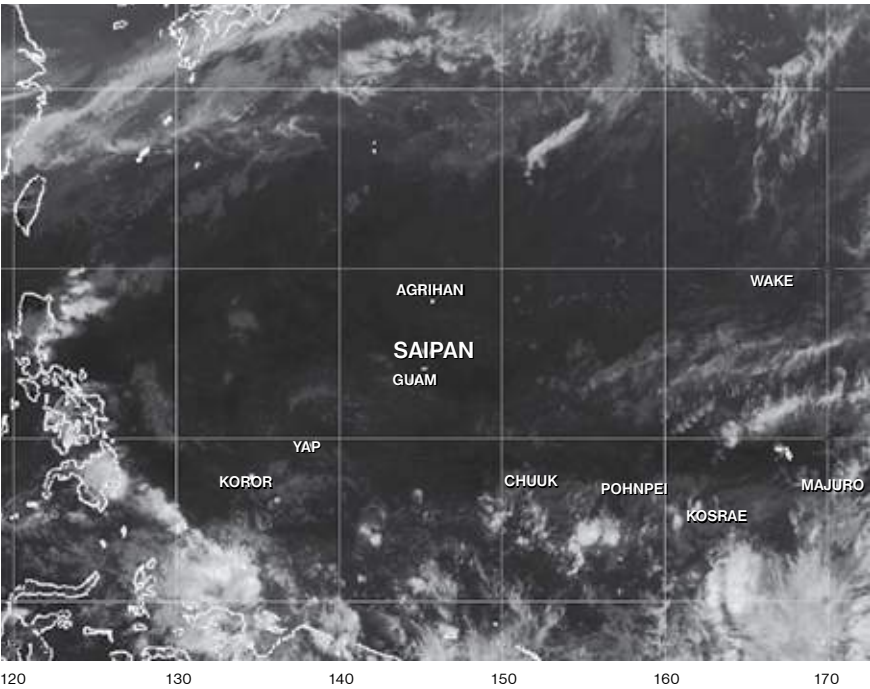
Around The Globe

Auckland	Rain	▲ 68 ▼ 60
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 57 ▼ 41
Hong Kong	Showers	▲ 72 ▼ 67
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲ 80 ▼ 68
London	Partly Cloudy	▲ 55 ▼ 43
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲ 66 ▼ 50
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 92 ▼ 82
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 67 ▼ 57
Miami	Thundershowers	▲ 80 ▼ 72
New York	Showers	▲ 58 ▼ 42
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	▲ 55 ▼ 46
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 59 ▼ 44
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 53 ▼ 41
Rome	Mostly Sunny	▲ 64 ▼ 46
Salem	Showers	▲ 59 ▼ 37
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲ 56 ▼ 50
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 48 ▼ 37
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	▲ 58 ▼ 49
Washington, DC	Showers	▲ 62 ▼ 44

Tides

Saipan Harbor				
1:35 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.7 Feet	
7:09 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	
1:56 PM	Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet	
8:17 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet	

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Low level convergence is producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms well south of Koror between 2N and the equator from 130E to 135E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Chuuk and southwest of Pohnpei within 50 miles of a line from 5N149E to 4N152E to 4N157E and south of Majuro between the equator and 6N from 164E to 177E. This second area includes Butaritari and Tarawa. A weak surface disturbance enhanced by upper-level divergence is producing scattered showers northeast of Wake Island within 100 miles of a line from 21N169E to 25N178E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:04 AM	6:31 PM
Thursday	6:03 AM	6:31 PM
Friday	6:03 AM	6:32 PM
Saturday	6:02 AM	6:32 PM
Sunday	6:01 AM	6:32 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	5:27 AM	6:16 PM
Thursday	6:07 AM	7:09 PM
Friday	6:51 AM	8:04 PM
Saturday	7:40 AM	9:02 PM
Sunday	8:33 AM	10:01 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

- PICTURES**
 - ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS
Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI
Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE
Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website: www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF APRIL 7, 2010											
DEPARTURES						ARRIVALS					
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM						GUAM-ROTA (ROP)					
C09597	5:00am	5:30am	1, 5			C09598	6:30pm	7:00pm	4, 7		
SAIPAN-GUAM						GUAM-SAIPAN					
C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily			C09316	2:45am	3:35am	Daily		
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily			C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily		
C09601	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7			C09600	10:05am	10:55am	Daily		
C09603	3:05pm	3:55pm	Daily			C09602	1:40pm	2:30pm	1, 4, 5, 7		
C09605	6:35pm	7:25pm	Daily			C09604	5:10pm	6:00pm	Daily		
C09599	9:35pm	10:25pm	Daily			C09606	8:10pm	9:00pm	Daily		
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)						NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN					
DL287	5:55am	8:35am	Daily			DL290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily		
DL297	3:35pm	6:15pm	Daily			DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily		
DL289	4:35pm	7:15pm	Daily			DL288	8:40pm	1:15am+1	Daily		
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)						BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN					
OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5			OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	4, 7		
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)						SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN					
OZ604	2:20am	6:10am	1			OZ605	9:00am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7		
OZ604	2:50am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7			OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7		
OZ606	3:30pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7			OZ603	8:10pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6		
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)						SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN					
FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6			FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5		
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)						GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN					
CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6			CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5		
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)						MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN					
OZ604/701	2:20am	11:25am	1 via ICN			OZ704/605	12:10am	2:30pm	2, 4, 6, 7		
OZ604/701	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN						via ICN		
OZ606/703	2:20am	11:00pm	1 via ICN			OZ706/607	3:35am	2:20am+1	4, 7 via PUS		
OZ606/703	2:50am	11:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN			C0890/9606	10:55am	9:00pm	6 via GUM		
						OZ702/603	12:45pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN		
						OZ702/603	12:45pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN		
OZ608/705	3:20am	12:10am+1	1, 5 via PUS						via ICN		
C09317/891	4:25am	9:45am	6 via GUM			PR110/C09596	10:00pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM		
C09603/893	3:05pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-Palau						via GUM		
						C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3, 5 via GUM-Palau		
C09603/933	3:05pm	8:40pm	Daily via GUM						Daily via GUM		
SAIPAN-HONG KONG						HONG KONG-SAIPAN					
OZ604/721	2:20am	11:45am	1 via ICN			OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7		
OZ604/721	2:50am	11:45am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN						via ICN		
						OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7		
OZ606/749	3:30pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN						via ICN		
C09603/909	3:05am	9:30pm	1, 5 via GUM			OZ722/603	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN		
						OZ722/603	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN		
									via ICN		
						C0910/9596	10:35pm	7:50am+1	1, 5 via GUM		
Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CZ: China Southern; CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)											

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

In the NMI—Whose court system is it anyway?

The people of the NMI should rise up in righteous indignation at the recent attempt by the Office of the Attorney General (AGO) to deprive a longtime, civic-minded, U.S. citizen resident of his birthright to have his very important complaint filed with the Superior Court resulting in the government recommending its dismissal based on the ridiculous excuse that he, as the plaintiff, has “no standing” to bring such a complaint before the NMI Judiciary at least according to the AGO reasoning.

Black’s Law Dictionary defines the term “standing” as: “*a party’s right to make a legal claim or seek judicial enforcement of a duty or right; to have standing a plaintiff must show that the challenged issue has caused the plaintiff actual injury and, that the interest sought to be protected is with the zone of interest meant to be regulated by statutory or constitutional guarantee in question.*”

I’ll discuss “actual injury” below.

The definition in the law dictionary further states in quoting one Joseph Vining, in “*Legal Identity*” 55 (1978), “*No authority found introduces the term standing with proper explanations as to who may be heard by a judge. Nor was there any sudden adoption by tacit consent. The word appears here and there, (sic.) spreading very gradually with no discernible pattern. Judges and lawyers find themselves using the term and did not ask why they did or where it came from.*” See: *Baker v. Carr*, 369 U.S. 186, 204, 82 S.Ct. 691, 703 (1962) *Brennan, J.*

The plaintiff’s complaint in this instance concerns 1 CMC, section 7207 which is a very devious and disingenuous legislative attempt—when employee—by the NMI government to “stiff” its creditors and others such as the Retirement Fund and in doing so escape its obligation to pay its debts. It’s a “Catch 22” and if applied permits a “dead beat” government to legally avoid otherwise binding contractual agreements as it has done in failing to consistently meet its full legal obligation to make the required payments to the Retirement Fund in a timely manner according to the NMI’s own laws.

Section 7207 provides; “*Except for funds appropriated for settlements and awards, no court may require the disbursement of funds from the Commonwealth Treasury or order the reprogramming of funds in order to provide for such disbursement. Any final judgment of a court shall be paid only pursuant to an item of appropriations for settlements and awards.*”

What a legal “mouse trap” that is.

I ask you, is this an ingenious and convenient way to avoid payment of a legal debt or what?

I have checked around and I can’t find any state that has a comparable “dead beat” law similar to 1 CMC, section 7207 on the books. If anyone finds such a law elsewhere among any of the 50 States please let me know.

I’m sorry, but the very existence of such a law strikes me as blatantly devious and certainly does not reflect well on a government which would ever employ such in an effort to avoid paying a valid debt to a creditor. The same applies to any legislature which would conceive and pass such a travesty of law.

The testimony of a very prominent and dedicated NMI Senator was mentioned in the June, 2009 Superior Court, “Judgment for Damages and Order Thereon”, (page 9), and noted that the Senator testified, “that legislative budgetary committees give minimal consideration to outstanding debts, settlements and judgments when creating the budget.” The Court then observed, “this disregard toward the Government’s creditors exhibits a disturbing amount of bad faith.”

To delay payment of a legitimate debt certainly doesn’t attest favorably toward exemplary fiscal and fiduciary responsibility in the exercise of self government.

My deficiency in the law prompts me to rephrases the issue as follows: “Don’t want to pay a lawful Government debt? The solution is simple. Don’t budget the payment year, after year, after year.”

I’m not an attorney—but I am an economist—and in my opinion I can tell you this egregious attempt on the part of the AGO to

violate a citizen’s right to be heard in court by some doubtful legal technicality is a shameful disgrace and can have unintended repercussions far beyond the issue at hand. It stains the NMI’s reputation with potential foreign investors who expect fair treatment at the hands of the government and could eventually call into question the honesty of the government among bond rating firms and others. Here’s why.

As I mentioned previously in this column an attorney for a bond rating company could take one look at that law and not even think twice about the possible adverse ramifications for any bond issuance. The same hesitation and concern for fair treatment would no doubt be experienced by a potential investor. And, truth be known may be one of several reasons why old line, pioneer Japanese investors have “bailed out” of the islands. The “*straw that broke the*

This egregious attempt on the part of the AGO is a shameful disgrace and can have unintended repercussions far beyond the issue at hand. It stains the NMI’s reputation with potential foreign investors who expect fair treatment at the hands of the government and could eventually call into question the honesty of the government among bond rating firms and others.

camel’s back” so to speak.

Plaintiff’s current law suit filed only recently in Superior Court as Civil Action #10-0041A, “A Complaint for Declaratory Judgment”, was formulated based on the contents of Superior Court Judge Kenneth L. Govendo’s “Judgment For Damages and Order Thereon”, Civil Action #06-0367 dated June 29, 2009.

The plaintiff’s complaint asks the Superior Court to declare 1CMC, section 2707 null and void on the basis it unnecessarily encumbers the NMI Judiciary in its efforts to enforce its court ordered payments by the government and violates the separate but equal,

For example, when the garment industry was fading out, did anyone seek an opportunity to supply our U.S. military about garments? However Puerto Rico, a Commonwealth just as we are, does over \$400,000,000.00 a year supplying garments to the U.S. military. Believe it or not there more opportunities like that waiting if only we would go looking for them.

I wish to send a strong message to all Legislators. Please encourage and motivate your constituents, especially the youth, to learn a skill whether it be academic or a trade. Our future depends on our motivated and educated citizens.

Let us welcome investors. They are a great avenue for the islands to grow. But let us also motivate our people to become skilled and educated participants in investors’ enterprises. I venture to say that once we become better educated in business, we will become our own investors. What a fabulous idea!

Look around and see what nations are growing and what nations are stagnating. It is not because of natural resources. But it is because of the quality of educated and skilled workforce or the lack of one. We must develop our human capital.

By **WILLIAM H. STEWART**

Special to the Saipan Tribune

William H. Stewart is an economist, historian and military cartographer.



constitutionally guaranteed, status for the Judicial Branch of the NMI government.

The letter complaint filed with the Court pointed out, “if the above has merit, then plaintiff’s standing should be irrelevant.”

The AGO’s response to plaintiff’s complaint cited fourteen (14) court rulings to illustrate why he did not have standing in this matter. The AGO asked the court to dismiss the complaint.

I ask you the reader—don’t you think there is something seriously wrong with the AGO’s effort to quash plaintiff’s reasonable and just complaint and suppress it completely? Wouldn’t you think that the AGO would be in the forefront to see an unjust, infringement upon the judicial system eliminated. Apparently not.

Returning to the issue at hand, the accusation that the plaintiff as a retiree had no standing to file in the NMI’s Superior Court requesting a decision on 1CMC, sec. 7207 because he was not an appropriate party to pose the issue may have been based on the erroneous belief that the application of the law has not yet resulted in any monetary loss to plaintiff personality.

For those who hold that opinion I beg to differ. As an economist I disagree based on the fact that plaintiff—and all members of the Fund—have indeed been injured financially as they have lost money resulting from the NMI central government’s failure to meet its legal obligation to pay—in full when due—the employer’s contribution together with other payments legally required and due the Fund.

The failure to make such payments when due, and in the amount required by law, has deprived plaintiff and all members of the Fund of lost interest earnings on that money which should have been available for interest earning investments but was not. This is the financial—not only to the plaintiff—but to all members of the Retirement Fund. The lost interest earnings alone on the \$280 million currently due but not paid is in itself staggering and amounts to millions of dollars on top of the \$280 million.

Reverse the situation, and you as a private tax payer try to avoid payment of a debt to the local, state or federal government and see how the court will rule in that situation.

I am aware that the Office of the Attorney General is the NMI government’s legal arm and as such presumably looks out for the government’s best interest, and one would hope that of its citizens as well. But in this instance does it? I think not.

I find it hard to comprehend that the AGO—rather than ignore this unjust law which in reality when applied to avoid payment of a legitimate debt is tantamount to being legalized larceny—and one which in all probably will be struck down when challenged as being *void ab initio* -- or should have been but regrettably is instead feebly defended by the Executive Branch. The AGO has chosen to attempt to thwart the efforts of a dedicated, tax paying citizen. An individual who has devoted his life in educating generations in the principles of democracy and good government and who has attempted to have this legal abomination expunged by the Superior Court from the Commonwealth Code and placed upon the trash heap where it belongs. My opinion, of course.

So the question remains, “Whose Court is it—the government’s or the people’s?”

As for my so-called “standing” as an economist to voice a freely expressed opinion based on 40 years of association with the NMI—my credentials are available for examination at: <http://www.saipan-stewart.com>.

INVESTORS

From Page 10

market trends.

However, there is no quick and easy method to develop human resource capital. The solution we pursue cannot merely be based on a reaction in the short term. There must be resolute determination to stay committed to human development. This is true everywhere....”

I pray that our leaders read and reread those passages. They express the essence of what we must do with your workforce. Please let us plan and act now or it will be too late. It is late, but not too late.

I have repeatedly mentioned that we have so many opportunities to develop our own industries and export its products. But it seems that no one seems to go after them. Instead we look for outsiders to come and pour money into our islands as we sit back and relax under the breadfruit tree. But it doesn’t work that way anymore.

I offer no apology for my aggressiveness on this subject of developing our own human capital. I will continue to scream this need from every rooftop. We desperately need professionals (white collar) and trade (blue collar) people. Until we realize this basic concept and develop local human capital, we will always be a poor and shameful nation. Ever wonder why our children refuse to return after they experience the multitude of opportunities elsewhere?

We have so many young people who are brilliant. They attend and graduate top universities. They compete successfully in various competitions against some of the mainland’s best and come out winners. We have a huge amount of talent waiting to move our country to greatness. Please, wake up and give them the motivation they need.

A proud and prosperous nation earns its own bread. Its citizens stand tall and proud among other nations. The CNMI must rise to meet this challenge or forever be a dependent nation begging for bread offered from outsiders. What a shame! How long are we to endure this? The challenge is ours. The talent is here! **Let’s develop our human capital now. Do it!**

O P I N I O N

Trekking for autism

To say that participants in last Sunday's Autism's Walk up north in Lower Marpi were left breathless afterwards would be accurate and an understatement.

Parents, children, and advocates for the differently-abled community chose the pathway from the Last Command Post at the juncture between Chalan Pale Arnold and Banzai Cliff Road to the fork that separates the Magpi Road and Chalan Kalabera as the venue for the walk to commemorate the Commonwealth's April Autism Awareness month. For management reasons, given the nature of the audience, it was a pathway well chosen.

As the view was undeniably breathtaking, it was just as equally amazing to watch children who are often considered as unruly trod without any untoward incident through the designated distance in the shadows of the famed Suicide cliff that saw civilian families at the end of World War II take their own lives.

Taking one's own life is often a sentiment not uncommon to parents dealing with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The demand that is required of guardians and parents to stay with and pay attention to diagnosed children is most daunting; 24/7 is just not enough!

I once drove at night in the mid-'90s, when I lived within the Capital beltway by the Potomac, on the Pennsylvania Turnpike while there were patches of ice on the ground, tempting fate to surprisingly shove a bright-eyed doe unto the path of my 70m/hr sedan so that I can violently swerve to avoid hitting Bambi's mother, and perchance, fling into the ravine after my *To Be or not To Be* soliloquy, then be in a position to gain enough insurance benefits for my spouse and children for years!

The financial cost of trying to understand PDD-NOS then, not to mention the cost of anxiously engaging professionals to either fix or cure the malady, was formidable. Now, it has become astronomical. Aye, there's the rub. Walkers this pleasant Sunday afternoon were undeterred.

The group in fact, was quietly celebrative. Acceptance and affirmation were writ large in people's faces, without remorse or apology. They had not come

By **JAIME VERGARA**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Vergara is a regular contributor to the Saipan Tribune's Opinion Section



to whine and bitch about a mysterious and maddening condition. They came to walk merrily with their children, their friends and their neighbors.

I know of three families who have struggled and journeyed together for a decade since a few met as Parents' Association Concerned with Autism (PACA), evolving into the Saipan, Tinian, and Rota Parents Organization (STaPO) inclusive of down syndrome and cerebral palsy. Autism Society-CNMI is the current group raising awareness, serving as fellowship among members, and in creative dialogue with advocates and service agencies. It has broadened its base, constituency and concerns considerably since the PACA and STaPO days.

Families who groped for guidance and hungered for colleagues earlier, now have children transitioning into adulthood and may have a new set of challenges but are no longer the angry, sniffling, lost and slobbering parents of yesteryears. They have become courageously assertive in the advocacy of their children's cause and care, a source of strength for those new parents who are just beginning to emerge from the realization that they will be caregivers for a lifetime.

Part of the reason PSS objected to limiting the legislation on the Commission on Autism is the possibility that they might later be perceived as favoring a category among the differently-abled when in fact, the mandate for Special Education in Public Schools is inclusive of all. On the other hand, precisely for the same reason, we might now realize how bulky ASD is to lump a huge number of children together.

Consider for instance the category "Asian" as referring to ethnic groups from the Dardanelles about the Aegean Sea to the western Pacific, and one can understand how cumbersome the category has become to actually constitute a manageable point of reference. It is time to

break up the ASD category so that we can deal meaningfully with sub-groups, allowing the category of the differently-abled (formally and officially referred to as "developmental disability") to remain as an overarching umbrella with many clinically diverse categories underneath.

ASD is defined by its symptoms of behavioral variance to the "norm," traceable to neurological reasons. While it is difficult to establish a direct scientific causality between vaccines and autism, for instance, it is, nevertheless, sensible to point out that toxic chemicals affect neurology (biology and field of energy), which in turn noticeably affects behavior.

The blame game is not the point of hypothesizing about causes. Making a hypothesis is the established procedure of scientific thinking since we adopted the method to make sense out of any condition. Any suspicious defensiveness of drug companies, especially those who try to strengthen the human auto immune system by injecting toxic chemicals into the human metabolism is, thereby, out of order.

Support for widespread and shared understanding of clinical investigations, such as the genome project, requires considerable allocation of assets. We pour billions of dollars to produce a drone to track down and eliminate a suspected "terrorist." Surely, we can also support the same effort in making sense out of a human condition that has evidently grown a-kilter.

In the meantime, we deal with variant social behavior, attempting to interject adaptive measures, which are mere palliatives to a serious condition. But, as ritualized by a pre-school class: "this is the day we have; we can live this day or throw it away—this is the life we have!" A similar spirit of affirmation in choosing to live rather than gripe about it was evident among the Autism walkers on Sunday.

the CPA junking is very unprofessional, and destructive to our economy. These types of individuals should be removed.

Please feel free to call me at (670)322-8589 or fax (670)322-4519. Again I send my apologies and hope you are able to understand my concerns and comments.

Eric A. Cruz
Ericco LLC president

L O C A L

12 NMC students visit Guam for Cultural Exploration program



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Students from the Northern Marianas College who traveled to Guam in observance of the College's 2010 Cultural Exploration were given the opportunity to visit the University of Guam in efforts to expose educational opportunities outside of the CNMI. In the photo, an administrative staff from the UOG advises participating NMC students about the institution's financial aid options, policies, and application procedures.

As part of its efforts to educate its students about cultural diversity and traditions in the Marianas, a group of 12 students from the Northern Marianas College traveled to Guam to celebrate and observe NMC's 2010 Cultural Exploration program from April 7 to 10.

The trip was organized by the college's TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) Program, which is federally funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

The purpose of the trip was to assist students explore and expand knowledge on Guam's culture, current lifestyles, traditions, modern factors influencing the indigenous culture, and spiritual means that shape ancient and current rituals and beliefs.

Student travelers include Robert Deleon Guerrero, Dyenina Diaz, Odin Garces, Silvester Javier, Christine Lely, Nina Manglona, Werlly Quitugua, Raylyn Sakisat, Jose Tudela Jr., Xerxes Mangarero, Lena Wabol, and Lorna Manahane.

These students were chosen

based on their ability to demonstrate leadership skills and their active involvement in daily TRIO program activities and events. The students were chaperoned by Clarice Arriola, SSS programs manager, and Neda Camacho, SSS counselor.

The trip featured educational-related field trips to distinguished sites such as Fish Eye Marine Park, the Talofofo Falls and Parks, and the Guam's Underwater World Aquarium. Some of the activities that took place within the field trip sites include observation of Polynesian dance performances, observation of historical artifacts and information about World War II in museums, gondola rides overlooking sites that relate to historical materials found in the museums, and an underwater world experience through a 319 feet long aquarium.

Students were also given the opportunity to visit the University of Guam and participate in a campus tour that educated them about the institution's dormitories, library

services, financial aid options, counseling services, and campus amenities.

The intent of the tour was to expose educational opportunities outside of Saipan and to provide a general feel of a four-year college.

"The trip to Guam was very educational," said Lena Wabol. "The campus tour gave me more insight on UOG's academic programs, financial options, and housing."

"The Cultural Exploration was a huge success. The students were fascinated by the fast-paced nature of Guam's lifestyle compared to that of Saipan and the UOG campus tour allowed students to become more familiar with its four-year academic programs," said Clarice Arriola.

NMC's Student Support Services is an outreach program that provides students with options for academic success, assists students with basic college requirements, and advises those who aspire to attain higher education. (NMC)

Tonga: Recommendations on ferry disaster accepted

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—The Tongan government said Friday it accepted recommendations made after a deadly ferry sinking but condemned the "inference" that it had failed to cooperate fully with an inquiry into the disaster that claimed 74 lives.

In its first public statement on the Royal Commission's findings released last week, the government said agencies would address the recommendations as soon as possible and criminal or civil suits could be pursued. But it disputed as "misleading and unhelpful" any suggestion that it had not cooperated fully.

"The government is satisfied that it has permitted unprec-

edented access to its records throughout the Commission's investigation and that its record of cooperation with the Commission to establish transparency in this affair ... is exemplary," the government statement said.

The commission's strongly worded report into the sinking of the Princess Ashika last August said the vessel was aged, overloaded and unfit for the open sea. It blamed the transport minister and senior shipping officials for buying and operating the vessel, which foundered and sank in deep water.

"It was scandalous that such a maritime disaster could ever have been allowed to occur. It was a result of systemic and indi-

vidual failures," the report said.

The roll-on, roll-off ferry was built in Japan in 1972 for inshore calm water sailing only. As early as 1985, when it was in service in Fiji, it was classed as unseaworthy.

Three people, including the ferry's captain and the head of the government-owned Shipping Corp. of Polynesia, which purchased and operated the Princess Ashika, have been charged with manslaughter over the sinking. Police have said the criminal investigation is continuing.

The commission's report has been widely reported by international media but has not yet been translated into Tongan for national release.

Open letter to CPA

What is going on up there at the Commonwealth Ports Authority? I have submitted a bid proposal back in Feb. 1, 2010 and was very surprised to learn a few things.

Your agency is considering junking the lone bidder because of its 208-percent increase over your current vendor, which is currently under extension.

I advise that you revisit the RFP specifications, which your

agency issued to base all as required. Please, this political game has to stop now. I call it nonsense! If your agency really believes in the economic boosting of the CNMI, then let the professionals do the price analyzing. They are everywhere, talking on real businesses every day and are 10 steps ahead of us. I am truly sorry, but the perception I gained when I read about the anticipated actions of

Business

Panel not ready to say when recession ended

WASHINGTON (AP)—A panel of academics that date the beginnings and ends of recessions isn't ready to declare just yet when this downturn ended.

The National Bureau of Economic Research said Monday that although most barometers show improvements in the economy, it would be "premature" to pinpoint the end of a recession based on economic data seen so far.

That assessment came after the group of academic economists met at its Cambridge, Mass., headquarters on Thursday to review mountains of economic data.

The panel looks at figures that make up the nation's gross domestic product, which measures the total value of goods and services produced within the United States. It also reviews incomes, employment and in-



In this file photo taken March 9, 2010, people walk on Wall Street, in New York.

dustrial activity.

The economists decided that many of the key economic indicators are "quite preliminary at this time and will be revised in coming months," NBER said. The government often changes its estimates of economic growth, job creation and other important barometers based on more complete information. The panel of academic economists was wary of making a declaration about the end of the recession when key government figures could still be changed.

NBER has already pinpointed the start date of the recession as December 2007, a determination it reaffirmed on Monday. Many private economists believed the recession ended in June or July last year. It has been the longest and worst downturn since the 1930s.

Top ex-WaMu executives come before Congress

WASHINGTON (AP)—Former senior executives of mortgage lender Washington Mutual, the biggest U.S. bank in history to fail, are appearing before Congress on Tuesday for the first time since the bank's September 2008 collapse.

Their testimony follows an 18-month investigation by a Senate panel that found fraud

throughout the bank's lending operations and failure by management to stem the deception despite internal probes.

WaMu's pay system rewarded loan officers for the volume and speed of the subprime mortgage loans they closed on. Extra bonuses even went to loan officers who overcharged borrowers on

their loans or levied stiff penalties for prepayment, according to the report being released by the investigative panel of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

Testifying at a hearing of the subcommittee Tuesday are former Washington Mutual CEO Kerry Killinger, ex-President and

Chief Operating Officer Stephen Rotella, and David Schneider, who was the highest-ranking executive in the bank's home lending operation. Two former chief risk officers and an internal auditor are also due to appear.

Sen. Carl Levin, D-Mich., the subcommittee chairman, said Monday the panel won't decide

until after the hearings on Tuesday and Friday whether to make a formal referral to the Justice Department for possible criminal prosecution. Justice, the FBI and the Securities and Exchange Commission opened investigations into Washington Mutual soon after its collapse in the fall of 2008 at the height of the financial crisis.

Global finance giants support investment conference in Manila

Leading global finance institutions back this year's 10th Pacific Region Investment Conference (PRIC) to be held in the Philippines in October.

The conference, organized by the Asia Pacific Association for Fiduciary Studies (APAFS) will bring together investment and finance professionals and organizations in the Asia Pacific region.

Key global players in the finance industry have pledged their support for the upcoming conference, among them, Morgan Stanley Smith Barney, Metropolitan West Capital Management LLC, Atlanta Sosnoff, Houston Global Investors, Renaissance Investment Management, and Louis Boulanger Now Limited/Bullion Manage-

ment Group.

Local finance institutions from the Philippines are likewise partners to the conference such as, the Financial Executives Association of the Philippines (FINEX), the Chartered Financial Analyst Society of the Philippines (CFAP), the Trust Officers Association of the Philippines (TOAP) and the Philippines Stock Exchange (PSE).

Daniel Roland, CIMA, Executive Director of APAFS states "We are grateful for the continuous trust that sponsors and partners have for APAFS, as they take part in the educational forums designed to further equip fiduciaries and investment professionals in exercising prudent fiscal stewardship."

APAFS annually holds the highly-esteemed investment conference where more than 400 delegates consisting of financial executives, key decision makers and professionals converge to learn from world-class experts and gain regional understanding of current economic issues. Last year, over 250 participants from 33 countries participated in the conference also held in Manila.

To learn more about APAFS and its events and conferences, log on to www.apafs.org

APAFS a non-profit educational association with the aim of providing educational forums for fiduciaries in the region. It was formed by a forward thinking group of fiduciaries throughout Asia in 2000. (PR)

Homeowners making sacrifices in tough economy

MIAMI (AP)—More than two thirds of Americans who've been unable to sell their home and buy one that better fits their needs have cut back on household expenses such as food, entertainment and clothing in order to pay their mortgage, a survey released Tuesday shows.

Homeowners who have fallen on financial hard times have made other sacrifices and lifestyle changes: About a third have downsized to a smaller home or delayed expanding their family as planned.

And, a quarter of homeowners who want to sell their current home and buy another say they need to make the move in order to lower their monthly expenses due to financial problems.

The survey, conducted for Move Inc., found wide-ranging concerns about the financial

condition of homeowners in a challenging economy, but also unearthed evidence of increased demand among investors in residential real estate.

"Concerns around employment and their overall economic situation are causing many people to wait until the economy improves before they commit to one of the largest purchases they'll most likely make in their lives," said Errol Samuelson, chief revenue officer for Move, which runs the Realtor.com and Move.com Web sites.

A stronger housing market will be an important part of the nation's economic recovery. As home sales and prices rise, consumer optimism usually follows suit, leading homeowners to feel wealthier and make them more comfortable spending.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

AUSTRALIA
4,978.40
Down 33.20 (-0.66%)

HONG KONG
22,155.87
Up 17.70 (0.08%)

JAKARTA
2,869.26
Down 12.07 (-0.42%)

TOKYO
11,161.23
Down 90.67 (-0.81%)

K. LUMPUR
1,334.77
Down 4.84 (-0.36%)

MANILA
3,299.90
Up 5.07 (0.15%)

SINGAPORE
2,970.80
Down 6.37 (-0.21%)

SEOUL
1,710.59
Up 0.29 (0.02%)

BANGKOK
760.90
Down 28.76 (-3.64%)

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
11,005.97
8.62

NASDAQ
2,457.87
0.00

S&P
1,196.48
0.00

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.0811
British Pound	0.6503
Canadian Dollar	1.0043
Chinese Renminbi	6.8263
Euro	0.7357
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7600
Indian Rupee	44.6040
Indonesian Rupiah	9,033.0000
Japanese Yen	92.7600
Malaysian Ringgit	3.2290
New Zealand Dollar	1.4018
Philippine Peso	44.7520
Singapore Dollar	1.3932
South Korean Won	1,123.9000
Swiss Franc	1.0587
Taiwan Dollar	31.5660
Thailand Baht	32.3400

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Yahoo introduces daily news-based series

NEW YORK (AP)—Yahoo's news site is launching a daily 90-second series based on its most popular stories. Yahoo says it is teaming with Toyota and the production company Reveille to make "Who Knew?". The feature made its debut Monday on the popular news page. Producers take the story that gets the most clicks on Yahoo's Web site and within 24 hours make a

feature that offers background material. Something new will be posted each workday. Woody Thompson, who created the "Pop Up Video" series for VH1, helped make this new series. The first episode Monday offered details about the Shroud of Turin, including how many times it has been put on display.

Asian shares fall in early trading

TOKYO (AP)—Most Asian stock markets fell in early trading

Tuesday as an appreciating yen overshadowed a strong finish on Wall Street. Lower commodity prices also dragged down sentiment, with Japan's Nikkei 225 stock average down 1 percent to 11,141.30. Exporters such as electronics makers lost ground as the dollar weakened to 92-yen levels from 93-yen levels a day earlier. A stronger yen reduces the value of overseas profits when repatriated to Japan. South Korea's Kospi lost 0.4 percent, and Australia's benchmark de-

clined 0.3 percent. Markets in Taiwan, New Zealand and Singapore also fell.

Oil falls to near \$84, extending 5 days of losses

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices fell for a fifth day to near \$84 a barrel Tuesday in Asia as traders mulled whether a slowly recovering U.S. economy justified the recent two-month, 25 percent crude rally. Benchmark crude for May delivery was down 24

cents to \$84.10 a barrel at mid-day Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract lost 58 cents to settle at \$84.34 on Monday. Crude jumped to above \$87 a barrel last week from \$69 in early February on investor expectations tepid U.S. crude demand will eventually catch up with a recovering economy. U.S. crude inventories have remained high, but some analysts were cheered by signs global economic growth is strengthening.

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

4 kids among 5 killed on rain-slicked Calif. freeway

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A pickup truck spun out of control on a rain-slicked freeway north of Los Angeles, causing a pileup that killed five people—four of them children—and injured six others, the California Highway Patrol said Monday. The three-car crash in the Newhall Pass closed the southbound lanes of Interstate 5 for about nine hours and came at the beginning of a storm that swept through Central and Southern California late in the season, dumping nearly an inch of rain over downtown. The driver of the red Mazda pickup lost control, spun into the center divider and overturned at about 11:55 p.m. Sunday, said CHP Officer John Lutz.

Mother testifies at hearing in Nev. ax attack case

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A 28-year-old woman said through tears and a translator that a Las Vegas man laughed as she pleaded for him to stop striking her and her 4-month-old son with a medieval-style battle ax on a residential street. Sonia Liset Castro on Monday peeled back a gauzy white scarf to show a judge the scars where surgeons reattached her face and jaw. She says her right eye is irreparably damaged. The boy was killed. Harold E. Montague sat in shackles, staring at the defense table in front of him during his preliminary hearing.

3 crew dead in north Ga. Navy plane crash

MORGANTON, Ga. (AP)—A Florida-based Navy plane just missed a house and crashed in dense woods in north Georgia on Monday, killing three crew members, and authorities were looking for a fourth person believed to be aboard, officials said. Naval Air Station Pensacola spokesman Harry White said authorities have not confirmed whether the pilot was among those killed when a T-39N training plane went down at 4:26 p.m. No one on the ground was injured, he said. The plane was part of Training Air Wing 6, which conducts routine cross-country missions through Fannin County, where it crashed, about two hours north of Atlanta, on the edge of the North Carolina and Tennessee borders, White said. Searchers found three bodies. The twin-jet plane can carry two pilots and seven passengers, according to a Navy Web site.

Fla. deputy shocks colleague with Taser in joke

NAPLES, Fla. (AP)—A Collier County deputy was reprimanded after shocking a colleague with a Taser in an incident meant to be a joke. The December scene was caught on tape at the Collier County jail. A female deputy was seen showing a message on her iPod to Cpl. Wilmer A. Arenchibia, who followed the woman and shocked her on the behind with his Taser. Arenchibia told investigators it was “a spur of the moment thing” and acknowledged the behavior was improper. He was given a reprimand and final warning after an internal investigation.

Okla. tea parties and lawmakers envision militia

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP)—Frustrated by recent political setbacks, tea party leaders and some conservative members of the Oklahoma Legislature say they would like to create a new volunteer militia to help defend against what they believe are improper federal infringements on state sovereignty.

Tea party movement leaders say they’ve discussed the idea with several supportive lawmakers and hope to get legislation next year to recognize a new volunteer force. They say the unit would not resemble militia groups that have been raided for allegedly plotting attacks on law enforcement officers.

“Is it scary? It sure is,” said tea party leader Al Gerhart of Oklahoma City, who heads an umbrella group of tea party factions called the Oklahoma Constitutional Alliance. “But when do the states stop rolling over for the federal government?”

Thus far, the discussions have been exploratory. Even the proponents say they don’t know how an armed force would be organized nor how a state-based militia could block federal mandates. Critics also asserted that the force could inflame extremism, and that the National Guard already provides for the state’s military needs.

“Have they heard of the Oklahoma City bombing?” said Joseph Thai, a constitutional law professor at the University of Oklahoma. The state observes the 15th anniversary of the anti-government attack on Monday. Such actions could “throw fuel in the fire of



Al Gerhart, co-founder of the Sooner Tea Party and founder of Oklahoma Constitutional Alliance, is shown in the showroom of his business, The Carpenter Shop, holding a “Sooner Tea Party” poster from their 2009 convention, Monday, April 12, 2010, in Oklahoma City.

radicals,” he said.

But the militia talks reflect the frustration of some grass roots groups seeking new ways of fighting recent federal initiatives, such as the health reform plan, which requires all citizens to have health insurance. Over the last year, tea party groups across the country have

staged rallies and pressured politicians to protest big government and demand reduced public spending.

In strongly conservative states like Oklahoma, some legislators have also discussed further action to fight federal policies, such as state legislation and lawsuits.

State Sen. Randy Brogdon, R-Owasso, a Republican candidate for governor who has appealed for tea party support, said supporters of a state militia have talked to him, and that he believes the citizen unit would be authorized under the Second Amendment to the Constitution.

Mine blast probe awaits recovery of final 9 bodies

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP)—Federal investigators arrived Monday at the West Virginia mine where 29 men died in an explosion last week to begin piecing together what caused the worst U.S. coal mining disaster since 1970.

Thirty miles to the north, hundreds of mourners including the governor observed a moment of silence at the state Capitol, during a wreath-laying ceremony at the foot of a statue honoring the state’s miners. Karen Barker was among scores of state workers who attended.

“My dad was a miner and my grandfather was a miner. I have no idea how these people feel about losing their family member, but I can imagine,” said Barker, 46, of Charleston.

The team of inspectors at the Upper Big Branch mine weren’t heading underground until searchers removed

Fewer deaths

In 2009, coal-mining fatalities were at their lowest level in 50 years.

U.S. coal-mining fatalities since 1960



NOTE: Office worker deaths included since 1973

Source: U.S. Mine Safety & Health Administration
Graphic: Tom Reinken and Doug Stevens, Los Angeles Times
© 2010 MCT

all the bodies from the mine. The team from the Mine Safety and Health Administration briefed Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis and MSHA director Joe Main at the mine.

The last bodies were expected to be taken out Monday, state mine office spokeswoman Jama Jarrett said. Recovery efforts had been stalled in previous days by volatile gases, but teams entered after the tunnels were ventilated.

The state panel that writes mining safety rules and typically reviews inspectors’ reports after the investigations are complete said it would like to join the investigators underground this time.

Richmond, Va.-based Massey has been under scrutiny for a string of safety violations at the mine, though CEO Don Blankenship has defended the company’s record and disputed accusations that he puts profits ahead of safety.

Source: Judge Sidney Thomas on Supreme Court list

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama’s candidates for the Supreme Court include a new name, federal appeals court Judge Sidney Thomas of Montana, and at least six others who were contenders when Obama chose his first high court nominee last year, The Associated Press has learned.

Among the others under consideration are former Georgia Chief Justice Leah Ward Sears, federal appeals court judges Diane Wood and Merrick Garland, Solicitor General Elena Kagan, Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm and Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano.

The president is seriously reviewing



Thomas

about 10 people as a potential nominee to replace Justice John Paul Stevens, who is retiring this summer.

Seven of those names are now confirmed to the

AP by the administration.

A senior administration official said the president’s consideration is not just centered on the three people receiving the most public attention: Wood, Kagan and Garland. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because no announcements have been made about

the people Obama is considering.

Thomas, 56, of Billings, Mont., serves on the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, the largest of the nation’s appellate courts. He was nominated to the federal bench in July 1995 by then-President Bill Clinton and confirmed by the Senate in January 1996, with no controversy, in a voice vote.

He comes from Western roots—born in Bozeman, Mont., bachelor’s degree from Montana State University, law degree from the University of Montana. Thomas worked in private practice in Billings and was an adjunct community college law professor there for years before becoming a federal judge.

Ohio terrorist ties to al-Qaida operative revealed

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)—A convicted Ohio terrorist had ties to a man convicted of plotting an attack on a French island as well as an al-Qaida suspect who met with some of the Sept. 11 hijackers and told them how to reach Afghanistan to train for jihad, according to a federal court ruling.

Guantanamo Bay detainee Mohamedou Ould Salahi sent Christopher Paul a fax in 1997 asking for advice on where to send would-be jihadists, or holy warriors, and later referred to Paul as “a man of great respect in Al-Qaida,” according to the ruling Friday by U.S. District Judge James Robertson in the District of Columbia.

Federal prosecutors had previously acknowledged the fax but had never said who sent it.

Robertson’s order referred to the fax as a key piece of the government’s evidence about Salahi’s recruitment for al-Qaida.

Salahi met Paul in Afghanistan in 1992, apparently had contact with him in Germany in 1998 and then called him twice from Canada in 1999, according to Robertson’s order.

The ruling by Robertson supported a previous order that the government release Salahi. Messages left with Paul’s trial attorney and with the U.S. attorney’s office in Columbus, which prosecuted him, were not immediately returned Monday.

The 9/11 Commission report says Salahi was known to U.S. and German intelligence a decade ago and was living in Germany when he gave instructions to four men about how to reach Afghanistan to train for jihad.

Asia

Protesters demand immediate Parliament dissolution

BANGKOK (AP)—Anti-government protesters insisted Tuesday on the immediate dissolution of Parliament, saying the Election Commission's unexpected order to disband the ruling party could be just a ploy to buy time in Thailand's political crisis.

On Monday, the commission ordered the dissolution of the Democrat Party for allegedly concealing campaign donations, while the powerful army chief threw his weight behind calls for new elections.

The moves were initially expected to blunt demonstrations by thousands of "Red Shirt" protesters whose monthlong campaign

exploded into brutal clashes Saturday, leaving 21 people dead and hundreds wounded in the country's worst political violence in nearly two decades.

But Weng Tojirakarn, a key protest leader, told The Associated Press that the activists would stick to their demands for Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva to immediately dissolve Parliament and hold elections.

"There's no other way. If Abhisit dissolves Parliament at noon today, we'll have all gone home by three in the afternoon. Just say the word and this whole protest will end," he said.

Weng said the commission

order still had to pass through the Attorney General's Office and the Constitutional Court before the country's oldest party could be ousted from power.

"Make no mistake about it: This is a long legal process. It can be a ploy for Abhisit to buy time," he said.

However, Weng mentioned no future protests and tensions subsided in the Thai capital Tuesday as residents and foreign tourists took to the streets to begin three days of Thai New Year celebrations. Weng said that the Red Shirts would also take part in what is an annual orgy of water throwing, dancing and heavy drinking.

Japan says China subs, warships came near Okinawa

TOKYO (AP)—Japan's defense minister said Tuesday that Tokyo is investigating an incident in which two Chinese submarines and several warships were spotted in international waters off the southern island of Okinawa.

"We are now conducting a detailed analysis, and will decide on our response after a thorough investigation, including whether there was any intent toward this country or not," Defense Minister Toshimi Kitazawa said.

Encounters between China's growing military and the Japa-

nese navy have increased in the waters between the two countries in recent years. The two governments both lay claim to valuable undersea gas deposits in the region, which they have agreed to jointly develop.

A ministry spokeswoman said there have been at least three cases of groups of Chinese military ships crossing through the area since November 2008. She asked to remain anonymous, citing department policy.

The latest case appeared to be the first involving surfaced sub-

marines, triggering the investigation. The group of ships were observed about 90 miles (140 kilometers) southwest of Okinawa in international waters.

Last week, a Chinese helicopter came within about 300 feet (90 meters) of Japanese military monitoring vessel that was in the vicinity of a China naval exercise, the spokeswoman said.

Tokyo has asked for an explanation of that incident through diplomatic channels and has been told its request is being considered, she said.

200,000 civilians flee Pakistan military offensive

ISLAMABAD (AP)—More than 200,000 people have fled Pakistan's latest offensive against Taliban militants in the northwest, the United Nations said Monday, as fresh clashes in the remote region killed 41 insurgents and six soldiers.

Elsewhere in the northwest, a suspected U.S. missile killed five alleged militants in a house in North Waziristan, the latest in a series of strikes in the region, Pakistani officials said. North Waziristan is home to al-Qaida and Taliban commanders, many of whom play a role in the in-

surgency in neighboring Afghanistan.

The military has pounded the Orakzai tribal region with airstrikes and artillery in an attempt to rout insurgents from the rugged, mountainous area near the Afghan border. Many Taliban fighters fled to Orakzai last year to escape a separate army offensive in their tribal stronghold of South Waziristan.

The exodus of civilians from Orakzai adds to the more than 1.3 million people driven from their homes by fighting in the northwest and unable to return.

The U.N. warned Monday it faces a severe shortfall in funding needed to aid those displaced, saying it has only received about \$106 million, or 20 percent, of the \$538 million appeal it launched in February for the next six months. Last year, the U.N. had received 40 percent of its appeal by this time, it said.

Martin Mogwanja, the U.N. humanitarian coordinator in Pakistan, said some aid groups providing water, food, health care and sanitation for the displaced were having to scale down their activities.

(230-meter) Shen Neng 1 left a scar 1.9 miles (3 kilometers) long and up to 820 feet (250 meters) wide along the world's largest coral reef, said scientist David Wachenfeld, who is coordinating the authority's assessment of the ship's impact. "We were expecting some fairly severe damage to this location, and our observations to date confirm that expectation," he said.

2 dead after stabbing rampage near S. China school

BEIJING (AP)—A mentally ill man went on a stabbing rampage as students left an elementary school, killing a second grader and an elderly passer-by and wounding five others, a government Web site said Tuesday, in the second random attack on schoolchildren in three weeks. The attack Monday afternoon in Hepu County of southern China's Guangxi region happened just after classes were dismissed at the Xizhen Elementary School, according to a statement on the Web site of Beihai city, which oversees Hepu. The attacker, whom the official Xinhua News Agency said was about 40 years old, was chasing people near the gate of the school. He was detained by police after the attack, Xinhua said, but gave no other details, such as his name or motive for the attack.

World

Russia points to human error in fatal Polish crash



A mourner looks on in front of the Presidential Palace three days after Polish President Lech Kaczynski died in a plane crash in Warsaw, Poland, Tuesday, April 13, 2010. AP

WARSAW, Poland (AP)—Russian investigators suggested human error may have been to blame in the plane crash that killed the Polish president and 95 others, saying Monday there were no technical problems with the Soviet-made plane.

The Tu-154 went down Saturday while trying to land in dense fog near a Smolensk airport in western Russia. All aboard were killed, including President Lech Kaczynski and dozens of Polish political, military and religious leaders.

They had been traveling in the Polish government-owned plane to attend a memorial in the nearby Katyn forest for thousands of Polish military officers executed 70 years ago by Josef Stalin's secret police.

The pilot had been warned of bad weather in Smolensk, and was advised by traffic controllers to land elsewhere—which would have delayed the Katyn observances.

He was identified as Capt. Arkadiusz Protasiuk, 36, and the co-pilot as Maj. Robert Grzy-

wna, 36. Also in the cockpit were Ensign Andrzej Michalak, 36, and Lt. Artur Zietek, 31.

In Warsaw, there was concern the pilots may have been asked by someone in the plane to land at Smolensk instead of diverting to Minsk or Moscow, in part to avoid missing the ceremonies.

Polish Prosecutor General Andrzej Seremet said Polish investigators talked to the flight controller and flight supervisor and "concluded that there were no conditions for landing."

Vatican to bishops: follow law, report sex abuse

VATICAN CITY (AP)—The Vatican on Monday responded to allegations it long concealed clerical sex abuse by making it clear for the first time that bishops and clerics worldwide should report such crimes to police if they are required to by law.

The policy, spelled out in a guide for laymen and posted on the Vatican's Web site, matches

the policy worked out by U.S. bishops after an explosion of sex abuse cases in 2002.

Unlike the American norms, however, the Vatican guide contains no call for "zero tolerance" for priests who rape and molest children, and victims immediately criticized it as insufficient.

The Vatican insists it has long

been the Catholic Church's policy for bishops, like all Christians, to obey civil reporting laws. But such an explicit policy had never been spelled out—until Monday.

"Civil law concerning reporting of crimes to the appropriate authorities should always be followed," said the newly posted guideline.

WORLD BRIEFS

Ukraine to give up nuke material; boost for summit

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama optimistically opened a 47-nation nuclear summit Monday, boosted by Ukraine's announcement that it will give up its weapons-grade uranium. More sobering: The White House counterterrorism chief warned that al-Qaida is vigorously pursuing ingredients and expertise for a bomb. At the same time, Obama and Chinese President Hu Jintao sought agreement on potential sanctions to discourage Iran's efforts to come up with its own nuclear weapon. Ukraine's decision dovetailed with Obama's goal of securing all vulnerable nuclear materials worldwide within four years—an objective that the White House hopes will be endorsed by all summit countries at a closing session Tuesday, even if the means to accomplish it are unclear. The fear is that terrorists or a nation other than the major nuclear powers could obtain crucial ingredients and inflict horrendous damage.

Mexico: Cartels team up to destroy hit men gang

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Three Mexican cartels have joined forces to destroy a gang of hit men that has grown into a feared drug trafficking outfit with reach into Central America, Mexican and U.S. officials said Monday. The shift in al-

legiances is fueling bloody battles along the Texas border. Intelligence reports indicate the Gulf cartel has recruited its former rival, La Familia, to crush the Zetas gang in the Mexican border state of Tamaulipas, said Ramon Pequeno, the head of the anti-narcotics division of Mexico's federal police. An official with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration said the Sinaloa cartel, Mexico's most powerful drug trafficking organization, has also joined the alliance against the Zetas, whose rise to power has come to threaten all three of the cartels.

Rio starts demolishing slums in high-risk areas

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP)—The threat of new mudslides forced officials to begin evicting 2,600 families from at-risk areas Monday as they embarked on a slum demolition program on Rio de Janeiro's hills. The danger also kept a shutdown in place for the popular trolley ride that carries tourists up a mountain to the famed Christ the Redeemer statue. Daniele Wall, a spokeswoman with Rio's health and civil defense department, said the statue remains open to visitors. Tourists can climb the mountain by car, but will not get the kinds of views that are available from the trolleys that circle their way to the top of one of South America's most impressive tourist destinations.

ASIAN BRIEFS

9 dead as suspected rebels attack RP town

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Suspected Muslim rebels wearing police and military uniforms detonated bombs and opened fire Tuesday in a southern Philippine town, triggering clashes that killed at least nine people, officials said. The attack began with a series of simultaneous bomb blasts that hit a sports center, near a Roman Catholic cathedral and the residence of a local judge on Basilan Island, a militant stronghold where rebels and troops have repeatedly clashed, said marine commandant Maj. Gen. Juancho Sabban. He said at least three marines were killed and one was wounded while trying to secure the provincial capital of Isabela city. Four civilians and two police officers also were among the dead, said Basilan police chief Tony Mendoza.

Barrier Reef damage 'severe' from ship grounding

SYDNEY (AP)—A coal carrier that ran aground and leaked about 3 tons of oil on Australia's Great Barrier Reef completely pulverized parts of a shoal and caused damage so severe it could take marine life 20 years to recover, the reef's chief scientist said Tuesday. Initial assessments by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority found the 755-foot

Campus Life

Education leader lifts community colleges higher

By CHRISTINE ARMARIO
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MIAMI (AP)—Eduardo Padron sat in his high school counselor's office, ready to discuss his future and fulfill the promise he had made his mother before boarding a plane and leaving Cuba.

But the counselor told Padron he wasn't college material. You should apply to a trade school, she said.

"When she said that, the voice of my mother in the back of my head was telling me, 'No, you're going to college and you can do much better,'" Padron recalls.

Rejecting the counselor's advice, he applied to many schools. He was accepted at just one: Miami's community college.

"If I'm passionate about this place," Padron says from behind his desk at Miami Dade College, where today he is the school's president, "it's because of my understanding of how this institution changed my life."

Padron—a man with a gentle demeanor, steely determination and the look of a polished, stately professor—is one of the greatest proponents of the nation's more than 1,000 community colleges.

His enthusiasm is shared by Barack Obama, who wants the U.S. to lead the world in college degrees by 2020—in part, by graduating another 5 million Americans from community colleges. Congress approved an additional \$2 billion for job training at the colleges, as part of the education legislation passed with the health care reform law.

As educators and officials look to reconfigure higher education, they'll be looking to Miami Dade College and Padron, who has transformed the urban school into one of the largest colleges in the United States, graduating more black and Hispanic students than any other public institution.

"What Eduardo has accomplished is a marvelous demonstration that open access and high quality can live together successfully in American higher education," said Molly Corbett Broad, president of the American Council on Education.

In the last year, as Padron fostered a close relationship with the White House, regularly conferring with top education officials on policy recommendations, Time magazine named him one of the 10 best college presidents in the United States—the only community college leader on the list.

It's a long way from the day a teenage Padron left Cuba with just a suitcase full of clothes, landing in a country where he knew almost nothing.

■ ■ ■

Padron describes his first



In this March 17, 2010 photo, Eduardo Padron poses for photos at the Miami Dade Community College in Miami. He remembers sitting in his high school counselor's office, ready to discuss his future. He was told that he was not college material. But he remembered the promise to his mother, he applied to several colleges. He was accepted at only one, Miami Community College. Today, he is the president of that school.

experiences in U.S. public schools with one word: "terrifying."

"I got to the school and I didn't understand a word and everything was alien to me," he says.

In Cuba, his family had lived in middle-class neighborhoods in Santiago and Havana. His father worked for a British pharmaceutical company and his mother was a housewife. Neither had received much formal education.

Both grew nervous after the initial euphoria surrounding Fidel Castro and the triumph of the revolution in 1959 began to fade. So they made a difficult choice, to send 15-year-old Eduardo and his 12-year-old brother to the United States along with thousands of other Cuban children. They called it Operation Pedro Pan.

Before they left, Padron's mother made him make a promise: "No matter what, I would go to college and go to school, even if I had to do without food for one day or two," Padron recalls.

As the plane took off, he tried to keep his composure for his brother. He could not.

"So I turned my face the other way so he wouldn't see me crying," he says.

A family friend took the boys into her one-bedroom apartment. Padron enrolled in high school.

The first days were filled with small tremors, the kind that could have easily set him on a different course: "The teacher and students are talking to you and you don't know what they're saying. Not being able to communicate, not being able to understand the homework assignment. At that age, in a strange environment, it can be

very frightening."

He worked three jobs, delivering the newspaper, doing inventory at a department store and separating clothing at a dry cleaners. With the little money he had, he bought a card to thank a teacher who had helped him.

When the teacher opened the card, she laughed. Students gathered around, and they laughed, too.

He had mistakenly thought that the card offered "simpatia" - friendliness. In fact, it was a sympathy card.

"I felt hurt," he says, "And I didn't know why they were laughing."

After that, Padron was afraid to write or say anything in the class.

"I was basically totally silent in the classroom for the entire period," he says.

■ ■ ■

When Padron enrolled in Miami Dade College, there was just one campus and about 5,000 students. Most were from poor and working-class families who couldn't afford larger private and state universities.

Padron would wake up at around 4:30 a.m. each morning and take three buses or carpool with students who each pitched in a quarter for gas and squeezed into a car "like sardines in a can."

He'd take early classes and then head back to work.

But if the stress of going to school, working and caring for his younger brother took a toll, other students couldn't tell. Frank Cobo, a student leader, remembers Padron always dressed in a shirt and tie, studious but jovial.

"Never a person that you couldn't tell a joke to," he said.

This, Padron says, "was the place where I gained self confidence. Where I truly felt I be-

longed."

He found a group of supportive students who had similar stories and concerns, and dedicated professors. He recalls once having to take a class only offered at night, and how a faculty member who taught in the evenings volunteered to drive him there, even though he lived 10 miles away.

His academic career flourished, culminating with a doctorate from the University of Florida in 1970.

Upon graduation, Padron accepted a job with DuPont, the scientific products company, then the largest corporation in the world. As he was about to leave for Delaware, he took time to visit his former professors at Miami Dade College.

"How come you're going to join the corporate monster?" they asked him.

He thought about the college and Miami. It was the place where he had bought his first shirt. Where he saw his first movie. Where he bought his first chocolate sundae. He decided to stay.

■ ■ ■

"Eduardo is like a soft person enclosed in a fist," says Carrie Meek, a former congresswoman who hired Padron for his first job at the college and has worked with him since. "He can be very nice and calm but he can be very, very feisty and aggressive when it comes to the goals of the college."

Chief among them: To open the doors to higher education as wide as possible.

"Most universities, unfortunately, in the United States, feel that they get the prestige not by how many people they let in, but how many people they keep out," Padron says. "That's not what America needs anymore."

Miami Dade College is now

one of the nation's largest institutions of higher education for undergraduates, second only to the University of Phoenix, a for-profit college with many campuses and an online operation. More than 170,000 students attend class at eight campuses, and alumni include actors Sylvester Stallone and Andy Garcia and prominent businessmen.

"What he's done with Miami Dade College has changed the lives of thousands of young people," says Ralph de la Vega, president and CEO of AT&T Mobility and Consumer Markets, another alum.

The college awards more associate degrees than any other school in the United States, even though 75 percent of incoming students need remedial classes. It has also begun awarding bachelor's degrees - though Padron insists "we're basically a community college. That's our heart and soul."

He's also credited with boosting the city of Miami, providing a home and financial support for the Miami International Book Fair, now the nation's largest, and an annual film festival. A 2003 study found the college had an estimated overall economic impact of \$1.6 billion on the community.

Alberto Ibarguen, CEO of the Knight Foundation and former publisher of The Miami Herald, described Padron as having "a practical approach that many other educators simply do not."

But his work with the students of Miami Dade has drawn the most notice.

"President Obama has pointed out that we need to increase our education attainment rates to maintain competitive as a country, and he's challenged us to do that," says George Boggs, president of the American Association of Community Colleges. "We'll be looking to Miami Dade and what they're doing to improve completion rates."

Despite record enrollment, vast numbers of qualified high school graduates are unable to enroll in college each year because of rising tuition costs—1.4 million to 2.4 million were unable to get a bachelor's degree in the current decade, according to a U.S. Department of Education advisory committee.

Community colleges increasingly have been filling the gap. Enrollment increased from 3.1 million young adults in October 2007 to 3.4 million a year later, according to a 2009 Pew Research Center report. Over the last two years, the colleges have seen a 17 percent increase, Boggs said.

Some of the students have

left careers dissolved by the recession. Others simply cannot afford the rising cost of tuition at private and larger state universities. Many come from schools that have failed to prepare them.

Nationwide, some 30 to 40 percent of incoming college students need to take remedial courses.

"One of the saddest things that you can ever witness is the high school student that comes to see an adviser with his father or mother or both and takes the placement test," Padron says. "And the adviser takes the placement test (and says), 'You have to take remedial writing, reading, math, life study skills.'"

"You see parents cry," he says. "You see students who say, 'I'm not willing to do that.' An instant drop out."

Padron has tried, essentially, the same approach that worked for him.

"They come with very little belief in that something good is going to happen to them," Padron says. "They doubt their abilities. Changing that is key for them to make progress. That's all we do."

■ ■ ■

At Miami Dade College's main campus in the heart of downtown, students sit on green benches talking on cell phones, holding binders and sipping coffee on a crisp winter day.

"If I had to say what this college represents, it's diversity," says Ansley Marcellus, 22, a pre-nursing student.

Marcellus immigrated from Haiti nine years ago, and chose Miami Dade because of the low cost and generous financial aid. He works part-time as a busboy at a Tony Roma's restaurant while taking classes.

Padron has "opened a lot of doors," Marcellus says.

Nearby, Iliana Alfonso, 18, chatted with a friend from Matanzas, Cuba, where both girls grew up. Alfonso immigrated three years ago and is taking English classes with plans of later studying medicine.

College "represents the future for me," Alfonso says.

The stories of Marcellus, Alfonso and other students attending today are much like Padron's.

"Being of my heritage, having an accent, meant to me that I have to work three times as hard in order to be at par," Padron says. "Because unfortunately people who are different from the mainstream are not considered, or not perceived to be, as good or as prepared or as well trained as others."

"But the lesson that I learned is, if you really try hard, and you prove yourself, you can really compete," he said. "There is no second guessing anymore."

Life & Style

Conan O'Brien to make TBS his new late-night home

NEW YORK (AP)—The late-night guessing game is over, with a startling twist: Conan O'Brien has chosen TBS as his future talk-show home.

Expected to debut in November, the as-yet-untitled show will return O'Brien to the air after an absence that began in January when he abruptly left NBC, his employer of 17 years.

O'Brien's new program will air Mondays through Thursdays at 11 p.m. Eastern, which will shift "Lopez Tonight," starring George Lopez, from 11 p.m. EDT to midnight.

O'Brien's show will originate from Los Angeles, where he moved from New York for his short-lived stint hosting "The Tonight Show." For the second half of each show, he will face off against Jay Leno, who replaced him.

The five-year contract gives O'Brien ownership of the show, according to a person familiar with the deal who spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not authorized to publicly discuss it.

Upon TBS' announcement Monday, O'Brien quickly fired out a celebratory tweet.

"The good news: I will be doing a show on TBS starting in November! The bad news: I'll be playing Rudy on the all new Cosby Show," he posted on Twitter.

TBS said that talks with O'Brien accelerated last week after Lopez called O'Brien to ask him to come aboard.

"I can't think of anything better than doing my show with Conan as my lead-in. It's the beginning of a new era in late-night comedy," Lopez said in a statement released by TBS.

Steve Koonin, president of Turner Entertainment Networks, said he flew from Atlanta to George Lopez's office on the Warner Bros. lot in Los Angeles last Wednesday to enlist the comedian's help.

Koonin pitched Lopez on the idea that both he and O'Brien are in their 40s (O'Brien turns 47 on Sunday) and appeal to a young demographic, while Leno and David Letterman are older and play to an older crowd.

"He got very excited," Koonin said. "George saw the vision."

Lopez picked up the phone to speak with O'Brien immediately. With his own show just months old (it began in November), Lopez agreed to have "Lopez Tonight" pushed back an hour.

Within days, a deal was struck.

"Hopefully, this will be something that lasts for the next decade," said Koonin.

The deal happened quickly, so there was no discussion about how many staff O'Brien could keep.

"In the 90 hours we had to do this, we didn't get into that," Koonin said. He declined to reveal the budget for the show. "They told us what they needed to make the show, and we said, 'Let's go make the show.'"

Koonin said he was optimistic that



This Nov. 7, 2007 file photo shows Conan O'Brien in New York.

O'Brien will have more freedom on cable, saying "cable has historically had a different temperament than broadcast," but noted, "Conan's not a dirty comedian. That's not what he does."

O'Brien's bitter break with NBC took place after he had hosted "The Tonight Show" for just eight months. Having followed Leno with "Late Night" since 1993, O'Brien had been guaranteed

Cameron: Amazon dam dispute a real-life 'Avatar'

BRASILIA, Brazil (AP)—Director James Cameron said Monday that a real-life "Avatar" battle is playing out in Brazil's Amazon rain forest, where indigenous groups are trying to halt the construction of a huge hydroelectric project.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Cameron said he was in Brazil's capital to support Indian and environmental groups as they stage protests against the Belo Monte dam project.

Cameron attended an environmental summit in the Amazon last month with former U.S. Vice President Al Gore. He returned this week to Sao Paulo to promote the DVD version of his blockbuster movie "Avatar," in which the fictitious Na'vi race fights to protect its homeland, the forest-covered moon, Pandora, from plans to extract oil. He said he came to Brasilia on his own initiative because he was drawn to the activists' plight.

"Avatar" has struck a chord with environmentalists worldwide, from China, where millions have been displaced by major infrastructure projects, to Bolivia, where Evo Morales, the nation's first indigenous president, praised the film for sending the message of saving the environment from exploitation.



Director James Cameron marches during a protest against a proposed dam in the Amazon in Brasilia Monday April 12, 2010.

"I'm drawn into a situation where a real-life 'Avatar' confrontation is in progress," Cameron said in a telephone interview while en route to protests taking place in front of the Mines and Energy Ministry.

"What's happening in 'Avatar' is happening in Brazil and places like India and China, where traditional vil-

Eubanks makes it official: He's leaving 'Tonight'

By LYNN ELBER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

"Tonight Show" bandleader Kevin Eubanks is making it official: He's leaving as Jay Leno's sideman in May after 18 years with the late-night host.

He told Leno during Monday's taping of "Tonight" in Burbank, Calif., that he was ready for a career change of pace, but he didn't announce specific plans. Eubanks called the NBC late-night show his "home" and said it had been "a wonderful experience" working there.

The 52-year-old Eubanks, whose duties included comic sidekick to Leno as well as guitarist, has been aboard since Leno took over "Tonight" in 1992. Eubanks became musical director when Branford Marsalis left in 1995.

In February, NBC said Eubanks had expressed interest in personal touring and recording.

His final day on "Tonight" is May 28.

his promotion to the "Tonight Show" last summer in a succession plan announced in 2004.

To keep Leno in the NBC fold, he was handed a prime-time show last fall that quickly flopped.

When O'Brien's ratings flagged, NBC angled to move Leno to 11:35 p.m. Eastern, pushing O'Brien to a post-midnight slot. O'Brien refused, walking away with a \$32 million settlement package.

Although that put him in play to host a show for another network, the exit deal barred him from appearing on TV until September. And within the TV industry as well as among viewers, the split launched a new parlor game:

lages are displaced by big infrastructure projects," he added.

The \$11 billion Belo Monte hydroelectric dam—which if completed would be the world's third-largest such project—was cleared for construction Feb. 1 by the Environment Ministry. Bidding for prospective builders is expected to take place later this month.

Brazil's government has said that even if it can't find private partners for the dam's construction on the Xingu River, which feeds the Amazon River, the nation has the funds to finish the project itself.

The administration of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva argues that the dam will provide clean energy and is needed to meet current and future energy needs.

Environmentalists are sharply opposed. They say it will devastate wildlife and the livelihoods of 40,000 people who live in the area to be flooded. They also argue that the energy generated by the dam will largely go to big mining operations in the Amazon, not benefit the average person.

Cameron said he sent a letter to Silva five days ago requesting a meeting and urging him to stop the project. He has not received a reply from the president,

What Will Conan Do Next?

Monday's surprise announcement hit only hours before O'Brien was to start a two-month, nationwide comedy tour in Eugene, Ore., aptly titled "The Legally Prohibited From Being Funny on Television Tour."

The news laid to rest persistent reports that he was likely to score a show on the Fox network.

Fox told O'Brien's representatives last week that the network would not be making a deal with him, said an executive with knowledge of the talks who spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not authorized to publicly discuss negotiations.

The network realized it would not be able to clear airtime for O'Brien in a manner that made sense. Most affiliates have contracts for syndicated shows airing in late-night hours that expire at different times. The idea of an O'Brien show premiering at different times over a two-year period seemed impractical, the executive said.

Fox network management had pushed to make it happen, realizing O'Brien represented perhaps their best opportunity to launch a late-night talk show, given his popularity with the type of young audience Fox seeks.

But some of the affiliates had also questioned whether a network talk show would prove as lucrative for them as selling their own commercial time for shows they air themselves.

Barring Fox, syndication to individual stations was widely considered O'Brien's most likely option.

All the while, few if any handicappers recognized TBS as a plausible destination.

But adding O'Brien to its lineup makes sense for TBS, which has come a long way since it started out as a local Atlanta UHF station that grew into the satellite-distributed SuperStation seen nationwide, then became the foundation for Ted Turner's media empire.

who is currently visiting the U.S.

"I wrote to him that, 'This is an opportunity for you to be a hero, a visionary leader of the 21st century, and modify Brazil's path in such a way that you have sustainable economic growth instead of economic growth that has serious consequences for certain sectors of the population,'" Cameron said.

He said if he were able to meet with Silva he also would tell him that he believes North America and Europe have to help pay to preserve the rain forest, which he said "provides a service to the entire world" by helping fight global warming.

The Brazilian Amazon is arguably the world's biggest natural defense against global warming, acting as a "sink," or absorber, of carbon dioxide. But it is also a great contributor to warming. About 75 percent of Brazil's emissions come from rain-forest clearing, as vegetation burns and felled trees rot.

"If North America and Europe have been responsible for the carbon pollution that started us down this inevitable slide of global warming, then they should take financial responsibility for those services that nature naturally provides," Cameron said.

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Clash of the Titans" has taken down "Date Night" at the weekend box office after all.

With final numbers in from the studios Monday, "Clash of the Titans" retained the No. 1 spot for a second-straight weekend with \$26.6 million. "Date Night" debuted in second-place with \$25.2 million, nearly \$2 million less than distributor 20th Century Fox had reported a day earlier.

On Sunday, Fox estimated that Steve Carell and Tina Fey's comedy pulled in \$27.1 million, about \$200,000 more than Warner Bros. reported for Sam Worthington's action hit "Clash of the Titans."

Flip-flops in the box-office rankings are rare, but they occasionally happen because Sunday figures are based on projections that can change when studios release final numbers Monday.

The top 20 movies at U.S. and Canadian theaters Friday through Sunday, followed by distribution studio, gross, number of theater locations, average receipts per location, total gross and number of weeks in release, as compiled Monday by Hollywood.com are:

1. **"Clash of the Titans,"** \$26,633,209, 3,802 locations, \$7,005 average, \$110,226,524, two weeks.
2. **"Date Night,"** Fox, \$25,207,599, 3,374 locations, \$7,471 average, \$25,207,599, one week.
3. **"How to Train Your Dragon,"** Paramount-DreamWorks, \$24,863,535, 4,007 locations, \$6,205 average, \$133,404,438, three weeks.
4. **"Tyler Perry's Why Did I Get Married Too?,"** Lionsgate, \$11,017,379, 2,155 locations, \$5,112 average, \$48,537,039, two weeks.
5. **"The Last Song,"** Disney, \$9,832,326, 2,674 locations, \$3,677 average, \$42,255,196, two weeks.
6. **"Hot Tub Time Machine,"** MGM, \$5,431,021, 2,611 locations, \$2,080 average, \$36,969,649, three weeks.
7. **"Alice in Wonderland,"** Disney, \$5,301,730, 2,530 locations, \$2,096

'Titans' tops 'Date Night' in box-office recount



"Clash of the Titans" retained the No. 1 spot for a second-straight weekend with \$26.6 million.

average, \$319,009,518, six weeks.

8. **"The Bounty Hunter,"** Sony, \$4,215,156, 2,901 locations, \$1,453 average, \$55,916,622, four weeks.

9. **"Diary of a Wimpy Kid,"** Fox, \$3,979,641, 2,453 locations, \$1,622 average, \$53,636,368, four weeks.

10. **"Letters to God,"** Vivendi, \$1,101,204, 897 locations, \$1,228 average, \$1,101,204, one week.

11. **"Shutter Island,"** Paramount, \$885,288, 869 locations, \$1,019 average, \$125,001,481, eight weeks.

12. **"Avatar,"** Fox, \$844,651, 454 locations, \$1,860 average, \$743,688,973,

17 weeks.

13. **"The Ghost Writer,"** Summit, \$822,351, 565 locations, \$1,455 average, \$12,293,735, eight weeks.

14. **"She's Out of My League,"** Paramount, \$645,893, 765 locations, \$844 average, \$30,122,867, five weeks.

15. **"The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo,"** Music Box Films, \$554,661, 126 locations, \$4,402 average, \$2,183,555, four weeks.

16. **"Green Zone,"** Universal, \$534,180, 614 locations, \$870 average, \$34,218,045, five weeks.

17. **"The Runaways,"** Apparition, \$469,260, 204 locations, \$2,300 average, \$2,517,227, four weeks.

18. **"Greenberg,"** Focus, \$420,938, 171 locations, \$2,462 average, \$2,943,653, four weeks.

19. **"Our Family Wedding,"** Fox Searchlight, \$386,291, 343 locations, \$1,126 average, \$19,360,257, five weeks.

20. **"Hubble 3D,"** Warner Bros., \$354,967, 41 locations, \$8,658 average, \$2,765,774, four weeks.

Sources: Jackie Kennedy interviews to be published

NEW YORK (AP)—During the first half of 1964, just months after her husband was assassinated, Jacqueline Kennedy sat for seven interviews with historian and family friend Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

Speaking at her home in Washington, D.C., the former first lady discussed her marriage and her White House years, election year campaigning and President Kennedy's thoughts about a second term. The interview is part of the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library's Oral History and, at Mrs. Kennedy's request, was kept sealed for an indefinite time. Since the death of Jacqueline Kennedy, in 1994, and son John Kennedy, Jr., in 1999, decisions about the tapes have been handled by daughter Caroline Kennedy.

Now, with the 50th anniversary of her father's inauguration coming next year, Caroline Kennedy is allowing the conversations to come out.

According to two officials familiar with negotiations, Hyperion

will issue the transcripts in September 2011 and release 6 1/2 hours of audiotape, providing a new and extended opportunity to hear the famously breathy voice of Jacqueline Kennedy, who never published a memoir, about subjects she rarely discussed in public.

The officials spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the deal.

Caroline Kennedy will serve as editor and write an introduction for the book, currently untitled, and a historian, who is yet to be determined, will provide annotation.

Schlesinger, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, died in 2007.

Caroline Kennedy has published several books with Hyperion, including a collection of her mother's favorite poems, and has worked for years with editor Gretchen Young, who acquired the book and audio and electronic rights.

Icon Hank Williams receives Pulitzer citation

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Hank Williams, the country pioneer who is among the most influential singer-songwriters in music, was given a special Pulitzer Prize citation.

The Pulitzer board awarded the late singer for his lifetime achievement, based on a confidential survey of experts in popular music.

"I don't think any country artist cast a longer shadow than he does, both as a songwriter and a performer," Jay Orr, vice president of museum programs at the Country Music Hall of Fame, said Monday. (A Williams family exhibit runs at the Hall of Fame through 2011.)

"His songs are master works. But there's a mystique about his character that still fascinates the people who have come after him. ... He was the romantic ideal of the hillbilly Shakespeare and his cultural legacy continues to grow."

The citation notes Williams' "craftsmanship as a songwriter" and his "pivotal role in transforming country music into a major musical and cultural force in American life." He joins other recent special citation recipients Bob Dylan, Thelonious Monk and John Coltrane on a short list of American masters.

Williams died Jan. 1, 1953, at the age of 29, cutting short a career that forever changed American popular music. Hits such as "Your Cheatin' Heart," "Cold Cold Heart" and "I'm So Lonesome



This undated photo shows singer and guitarist Hank Williams.

"I Could Cry" have been covered by hundreds of musicians across several genres. More than 55 years after his death, he remains a central figure in country music.

Orr noted that musicians as diverse as George Jones, Ray Charles, Tony Bennett and Beck have plumbed the rich vein of Williams' music over the years. Williams' descendants—children, Hank Jr. and Jett, and grandchildren,

Hank III, Holly and Hilary—continue to add to his legacy.

Born in Alabama, he grew up during the Depression, dreaming of playing country music. His first big break came when music publisher Fred Rose offered him the chance to record his own songs. His first release for MGM Records, "Move It on Over," was a hit in 1947 and he went on to record 11 No. 1 songs.

Orr said Williams took his "honky tonk confessionals," to working-class people who identified with Williams' honesty.

"He really helped to legitimize that confessional mode with songs like, 'Cold Cold Heart'—'Why can't I free your doubtful mind/and melt your cold cold heart?'" Orr said. "That's something we've all wondered about a woman at one time or another."

Holly Williams said in an e-mail to The Associated Press that she just finished a tour in Europe and that Williams' legacy is appreciated there as well, showing his universal appeal.

"Who else has been covered by everyone from Bob Dylan to Tony Bennett to Coldplay to Buddy Guy?" she wrote. "He deserves this honor on every level and the family is really happy about this. His genius will always live on and it's nice to know that people are still remembering him with accolades more than 50 years after his death."

Ferrera to make interactive telenovela with P&G

NEW YORK (AP)—"Ugly Betty" will soon be over for its star, America Ferrera, but she's got a new project in the works from behind the scenes.

Ferrera will serve as executive producer of "Pedro & Maria," a multicultural, interactive telenovela in development for MTV television and various Web platforms. The project was announced Monday by MTV and Electus, the multimedia studio created by the prolific producer and former NBC executive Ben Silverman.

"Pedro & Maria" is billed as a bilingual, modern-day version of "Romeo & Juliet" that will give its audience the ability to vote on the direction the characters and story lines take.

No casting decisions or premiere date were announced for the project.

Procter & Gamble Co., which makes everything from shaving cream to batteries, will co-produce the project, making commercials with "Pedro & Maria" touches inside them.

"Right now, the plan is much more for them to utilize elements of the show in their own marketing, and for them to use customized vignettes outside of the show," Silverman said.

It's the type of project that marries advertisers with content that Silverman



In this publicity image released by ABC, America Ferrera portrays Betty Suarez in a scene from the series finale of "Ugly Betty," airing Wednesday, April 14, 2010.

had long championed at NBC.

"It's really the triangulation of all of the hard work that my career has been built up for," he said.

Electus is part of IAC/InterActiveCorp. MTV is a division of Viacom Inc.

Vatican makes peace with the Beatles

VATICAN CITY (AP)—The Vatican has finally made peace with the Beatles, saying their drug use, “dissolute” lives and even the claim that the band was bigger than Jesus are all in the past—while their music lives on.

Vatican newspaper L'Osservatore Romano paid tribute to the Fab Four in its weekend editions, with two articles and a front-page cartoon reproducing the crosswalk immortalized on the cover of the band's album “Abbey Road.”

The tribute marked the 40th anniversary of the band's breakup.

“It's true, they took drugs; swept up by their success, they lived dissolute and uninhibited lives,” said the paper. “They even said they were more famous than Jesus,” it said, recalling John Lennon's 1966 comment that outraged many Catholics and others.

“But, listening to their songs, all of this seems distant and meaningless,” L'Osservatore said. “Their beautiful melodies, which changed forever pop music and still give us emotions, live on like precious jewels.”

It is not the first time the Vatican has praised the legendary band from Liverpool.

Two years ago, Vatican me-



In this Aug. 11, 1966 file photo, John Lennon of the Beatles, center, is flanked by bandmates George Harrison, left, and Ringo Starr as he apologizes for his remark that “the Beatles are more popular than Jesus,” at a Chicago news conference.

dia hailed the Beatles' musical legacy on the 40th anniversary of the “White Album.” And last month the Vatican paper included “Revolver” in its semiserious list of top-10 albums.

Now, L'Osservatore says that the Beatles' songs have

stood the test of time, and that the band remains “the longest-lasting, most consistent and representative phenomenon in the history of pop music.”

Giovanni Maria Vian, the editor in chief of L'Osservatore Romano, said Monday that he

loves the Beatles.

He said that at the time of Lennon's sensational statement, Osservatore “commented that in reality it wasn't that scandalous, because the fascination with Jesus was so great that it attracted these new heroes of the time.”

Tesh confirms book report, says he dated Oprah

NEW YORK (AP)—John Tesh confirms one of the reports in a revealing unauthorized biography of Oprah Winfrey.

The former “Entertainment Tonight” anchor-turned-new age musician says he and Winfrey used to date.

The 57-year-old Tesh says he and the 56-year-old Winfrey dated while working in local news in Nashville, Tenn.

The book “Oprah: A Biography” claims Tesh and Winfrey didn't just date, but lived together for a short period in the 1970's. It goes on to say Tesh abruptly ended the relation-



In this March 15, 2002 file photo, John Tesh poses in New York.

ship one night when he noticed their contrasting skin colors and couldn't handle being in an interracial relationship.

Tesh has not commented on the book's explanation for their split, but did tell “Entertainment Tonight” he and Winfrey remain good friends.

Winfrey's representatives did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

“Oprah: A Biography,” written by Kitty Kelley, hits stores Tuesday. Kelley has written unauthorized biographies on celebrities, including Jackie Kennedy, Frank Sinatra and Nancy Reagan.

OJ lawyers get Nevada Supreme Court oral argument

LAS VEGAS (AP)—A Nevada Supreme Court panel is scheduling oral arguments June 11 in Las Vegas on pending appeals by O.J. Simpson and a co-defendant convicted of kidnapping, armed robbery and other charges in a September 2007 hotel room heist.

A clerk for the state high court

in Carson City says a panel of three justices will hear separate 30-minute oral appeals from lawyers for the NFL Hall of Famer and co-defendant Clarence “C.J.” Stewart.

The two men were tried together and convicted in 2008 of robbing two sports memo-

rabilia dealers at gunpoint in Las Vegas of items Simpson claimed were his.

Both filed appeals in May 2009.

The 62-year-old Simpson is serving nine to 33 years in a Nevada prison. Stewart is serving 7 1/2 to 27 years.

Sisters of producer's wife turn to LA prosecutors

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The sisters of a Hollywood television producer's wife found dead in Cancun, Mexico, have asked Los Angeles prosecutors to assist with the case.

Attorney Alison Triessl represents Carla and Jeane Burgos, whose sister Monica was found dead in Mexico. Monica Beresford-Redman was married to former “Survivor” producer and “Pimp My Ride” creator Bruce Beresford-Redman.

Triessl says in a statement the family has asked the district at-

torney's office to “assist in any way that they can.”

Los Angeles County district attorney's spokeswoman Sandi Gibbons confirms staff in their office met with the Burgos' attorneys on Monday. She declined to elaborate on what was discussed.

In this photo provided by Mariza Alyrio, Monica Beresford-Redman is shown at her Zabumba Brazilian restaurant, in Dec. 2009, made available Thursday, April 8, 2010.



Boyfriend skirts commitment by using daughter as excuse

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: My boyfriend and I have been together for a number of years, and were close friends before dating. We have lived together for 10 months now and pretty much act like a married couple. I feel I am ready to become engaged.

He, on the other hand, feels we should wait until his 16-year-old daughter, “Lacy,” moves out -- either back with her mother or on her own. He doesn't feel it's “right” for us to marry before then.

We are both adults, and while I don't want to disregard Lacy's feelings, I think this is something WE should decide. We have told her many times that our relationship doesn't mean Daddy loves her any less.

Something in me is beginning to think he's just making excuses and he won't “buy the cow” as long as he's getting the milk for free. I feel like I am

FLOATING IN LIMBO IN DELAWARE

DEAR IN LIMBO: You and your boyfriend need to have a frank talk because it appears you thought moving in with him would bring you a firm commitment, and he appears to be happy with the status quo. If you haven't already done so, tell him exactly what you have told me, because what you have written makes perfect sense. And if he's unwilling to budge, then it's time for you to “moo-ve” out.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I recently attended a funeral of someone close. It was a sad time for me, but it sparked an idea that may bring comfort to my family and friends when it's my time to go.

Abby, would it be out of line to make a goodbye video of myself? It would include fond memories that would put a smile on someone's face and allow my family and friends to remember me as I was alive, not as I lay in a coffin. Instead of a plastic bookmark, I could leave a DVD of my final goodbyes.

I have a health problem and don't know how long I have, so I'd like to know what you and your readers think about my idea. I trust your advice, Abby, so please let me know.

FINAL FAREWELL, UPSTATE NEW YORK

DEAR FAREWELL: As long as your video is done tastefully, I see no reason why you shouldn't do it. We live in an age when video and YouTube are a part of our everyday lives. I'm sure your memento will be treasured by the loved ones you leave behind.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: For Valentine's Day I bought a dozen red roses and had them delivered to my girlfriend's workplace. On her way home that evening, she made a stop at the grocery store and encountered a distraught young man near tears because he couldn't afford to buy flowers for his girlfriend. She offered him money but he refused, so she gave him the roses I bought for her. (Abby, they had cost me more than \$82!)

The whole episode still has me upset. I know the roses were a gift and she had every right to do with them as she wished. But I think what she did was thoughtless and insensitive and didn't take my feelings into consideration. She says I am narrow-minded because I don't see it from her perspective. What do you think?

GRINCHED IN IOWA

DEAR GRINCHED: I can see how, having spent as much as you did for the roses, you could be upset. I can also see how your kindhearted girlfriend might have had pity on the guy and acted on impulse. While the roses were hers, she could have accomplished the same thing by giving him one or two of the roses to give to his girlfriend. However, if you care about this relationship, you'll stop brooding and drop the matter.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order “How to Be Popular.” Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

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Johnson scores 31 to help Hawks beat Bucks



MILWAUKEE (AP)—Joe Johnson scored 31 points to help the Atlanta Hawks beat the Milwaukee Bucks 104-96 in a matchup between potential first-round playoff opponents Monday.

Marvin Williams added 18 points for the Hawks, who had six players score in double figures and continued to solidify their spot as the No. 3 seed in the Eastern Conference.

John Salmons scored 28 and Brandon Jennings added 21 in the regular-season home finale for the Bucks. Jennings was 2 for 11 from 3-point range.

Heat 107, 76ers 105

At Philadelphia, Dwyane Wade scored 30 points and assisted on Udonis Haslem's go-ahead basket with 1.3 seconds left as Miami beat Philadelphia.

Andre Iguodala tied it at 105-105 for the Sixers on a 3-pointer with 20 seconds left. But the Heat, playing for fifth place in the East, weren't about to go down against one of the worst teams in the NBA.

Wade scored several baskets late in the fourth, but it was his assist to Haslem in the corner that was the difference.

Quentin Richardson had 15 points and 12 rebounds for the Heat.

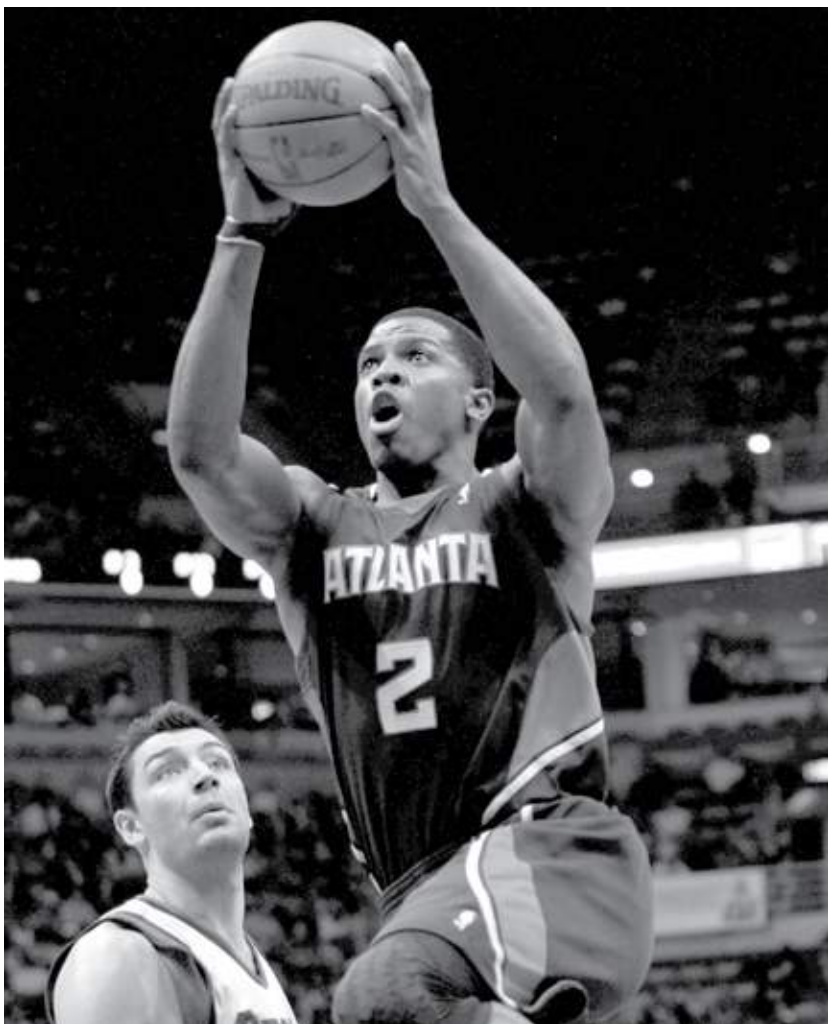
Raptors 111, Pistons 97

At Auburn Hills, Michigan, Andrea Bargnani had 33 points and Amir Johnson scored a career-high 26 as Toronto improved its playoff prospects by beating Detroit to snap a five-game losing streak.

Toronto moved within a half-game of the Bulls for the final postseason spot in the Eastern Conference.

The Raptors, who close the season Wednesday at home against New York, will earn a playoff berth if they end the season tied with Chicago, which finishes against Boston and at Charlotte.

Detroit's Charlie Villanueva scored 16 points in the team's home finale. Ben Gordon had 24 for the Pistons,



Atlanta Hawks' Joe Johnson goes up for a shot against Milwaukee Bucks' Carlos Delfino, left, in the first half of an NBA basketball game Monday, April 12, 2010, in Milwaukee.

whose miserable season ends Wednesday at Milwaukee.

Magic 118, Pacers 98

At Indianapolis, Vince Carter scored 21 points to help Orlando beat Indiana for its fifth straight win.

Jameer Nelson had 15 points, eight assists and seven rebounds, and Rashard Lewis scored 14 points for the Magic. Matt Barnes had 13 points and 11 rebounds, and Dwight Howard added 12 points and 11 boards.

A.J. Price scored 19 points, and Dan-

ny Granger and Mike Dunleavy added 18 for the Pacers in their home finale. Indiana had won four straight and 10 of 12 overall.

Bobcats 105, Nets 95

At East Rutherford, New Jersey, Stephen Jackson had 17 points and nine rebounds as Charlotte beat New Jersey.

Gerald Henderson led the bench crew with 14 points, while fellow reserve Tyrus Thomas added 13 and D.J. Augustin 11.

With Miami's win over Philadelphia

earlier, the Bobcats were cemented into the No. 7 playoff spot in the Eastern Conference. They will meet the defending conference champion Orlando Magic in the first round this weekend.

Devin Harris had 22 points for the Nets.

Knicks 114, Wizards 103

At New York, Danilo Gallinari scored all of his 24 points in the second half and David Lee had 26 as New York rallied past Washington in its final home game of the season.

Sergio Rodriguez added all of his 12 points in the fourth quarter, sparking the key spurt midway through the period, as the Knicks snapped a three-game losing streak. Toney Douglas scored 16 and Chris Duhon 14.

Mike Miller scored 23 points for the Wizards, who end their woeful season Wednesday against Indiana.

Spurs 133, Timberwolves 111

At San Antonio, Keith Bogans scored 17 points as San Antonio kept its playoff hopes alive with a win over Minnesota.

Tim Duncan had 16 points before the Spurs emptied their bench early and stayed on track to avoid the dreaded No. 8 seed in the Western Conference and a first-round meeting with the Los Angeles Lakers.

The Spurs can clinch at least the No. 7 seed with a win in their regular-season finale Wednesday against Dallas.

Sasha Pavlovic led the Timberwolves with 16 points.

Nuggets 123, Grizzlies 101

At Denver, J.R. Smith scored 26 points as Denver broke out of its offensive funk with a victory over Memphis.

With their biggest output in a month, the Nuggets also got 21 points from Carmelo Anthony and 20 from Nene, both of whom sat out the fourth quarter while watching Smith and Aaron Af-

falo, who scored 22 points and pulled down a career-best 13 rebounds.

Now, the Nuggets are off to Phoenix for a crucial game in their season finale Tuesday.

Rockets 117, Kings 107

At Sacramento, California, Kevin Martin scored 39 points for Houston in a triumphant return to Sacramento.

Rookie Tyreke Evans reach an exclusive milestone by scoring 24 points, assuring himself of joining Oscar Robertson, Michael Jordan and LeBron James as the only rookies in NBA history to average at least 20 points, five rebounds and five assists a game.

Martin shot 11 for 20 and made all 16 of his free throws. Trevor Ariza added 29 points.

Trail Blazers 103, Thunder 95

At Portland, Oregon, Marcus Camby scored a season-high 30 points and pulled down 13 rebounds as Portland beat Oklahoma City.

The loss locked the Thunder into the eighth spot in the Western Conference, meaning they'll face the defending champion Los Angeles Lakers in the first round of the playoffs.

Kevin Durant led the Thunder with 30 points.

Mavericks 117, Clippers 94

At Los Angeles, Dirk Nowitzki scored 25 points in 22 minutes and Shawn Marion added 21 points in his return from an injury as Dallas kept a firm grip on the No. 2 seed in the Western Conference playoffs by beating Los Angeles.

Jason Kidd had 12 points and 12 assists for the Mavericks, who blew out the lifeless Clippers with a 37-point first quarter on the way to a 64-43 half-time lead.

Chris Kaman had 17 points and seven rebounds for the Clippers.

Mauer, Twins open Target Field, top Red Sox



MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—After nearly three decades inside the Metrodome, the Minnesota Twins moved outdoors and beat the Boston Red Sox, 5-2, Monday thanks to hometown star Joe Mauer in the first regular-season game at their new Target Field ballpark.

Jason Kubel hit the first home run and Carl Pavano earned the first victory.

Pavano (2-0) gave up four hits and one run in six innings and the Twins bullpen backed him up, with Jon Rauch recording his fifth save.

Rays 5, Orioles 1

At Baltimore, Matt Garza allowed one run in eight innings and Carl Crawford had four hits from four at bats with a homer as Tampa Bay downed Baltimore.

The game drew 9,129 fans, the smallest crowd in the 19-year history of Camden Yards.

Reid Brignac also homered for the Rays in their first road game of the season.

White Sox 8, Blue Jays 7, 11 innings

At Toronto, Mark Teahen tripled home the go-ahead run in the 11th inning as

Chicago snapped Toronto's five-game winning streak and spoiled the Blue Jays' home opener.

Mark Kotsay led off the 11th with a pinch-hit single off Jeremy Accardo (0-1) and was replaced by pinch runner Omar Vizquel. Teahen followed with a triple to right center.

Athletics 4, Mariners 0

At Seattle, Justin Duchscherer pitched into the eighth inning to help Oakland ruin Seattle's home opener.

Cliff Pennington homered and Gabe Gross had a two-run single for Oakland, off to a surprising 6-2 start.

Duchscherer (1-0) allowed two hits and walked two in 7 1-3 innings. The right-hander, a two-time All-Star, missed last season because of an elbow injury and was later treated for clinical depression.

Rangers 4, Indians 2, 10 innings

At Cleveland, Nelson Cruz hit his fifth home run of the season, connecting in the 10th inning as Texas spoiled Cleveland's sold-out opener and manager Manny Acta's home debut.

Cruz's two-run drive came with one out against Jamey Wright (0-1). Cruz

leads the AL in home runs.

Royals 10, Tigers 5

At Detroit, Jose Guillen hit a two-run homer after his two-out foul popup was dropped by Detroit first baseman Miguel Cabrera, helping Kansas City end the Tigers' four-game winning streak.

Guillen took advantage of Cabrera's error for a go-ahead homer in the fourth inning.

Scott Podsednik had four hits, including a two-run single in the sixth that helped the Royals pull away.

Cardinals 5, Astros 0

At St. Louis, Albert Pujols homered and drove in four runs to lead Adam Wainwright and the St. Louis Cardinals over winless Houston in their home opener.

New batting coach Mark McGwire drew one of the biggest cheers during the pregame introductions before his first home game since retiring after the 2001 season.

Pujols hit an RBI single and a three-run homer and Ryan Ludwick went 4 for 4. Wainwright (2-0) pitched eight innings and added his first career pickoff.

Padres 17, Braves 2

At San Diego, Will Venable's two-run

shot highlighted a 10-run fourth inning, and Kyle Blanks homered and drove in a career-high five runs to lead San Diego to a rout of Atlanta in its home opener.

The Padres hit and scored as if they were playing in a bandbox rather than spacious Petco Park. Their 17 runs, on 19 hits, were the most by any team at the downtown ballpark since it opened in 2004.

Giants 9, Pirates 3

At San Francisco, Bengie Molina had four RBIs from four at bats to help Barry Zito and San Francisco get the win over Pittsburgh.

Pablo Sandoval had three hits and scored twice for San Francisco, which is tied with Philadelphia for the best start in the majors at 6-1. Aubrey Huff went 2 for 2 and scored three runs.

Zito (2-0) pitched six-plus innings in his 100th career start with the Giants, yielding three runs and five hits. The left-hander has won his first two starts for the first time since 2003, when he finished 14-12.

Reds 6, Marlins 5, 10 innings

At Miami, Scott Rolen homered twice and drove in the go-ahead run in the 10th

inning to help Cincinnati beat Florida.

Orlando Cabrera hit a two-run homer for Cincinnati. Rolen hit solo drives in the second and fourth, and has three homers after hitting 11 last year. Nick Masset (2-0) got the win.

Joey Votto started the 10th with a walk against Burke Badenhop (0-1). He advanced on a sacrifice and scored on Rolen's one-out single.

Phillies 7, Nationals 4

At Philadelphia, Placido Polanco hit a go-ahead single and Chase Utley had a two-run homer as Philadelphia overcame an early deficit to beat Washington in their home opener.

The two-time defending NL champions are off to a 6-1 start, their best since opening the 1993 pennant-winning season 7-1.

Cubs 9, Brewers 5

At Chicago, Xavier Nady, Jeff Baker and Aramis Ramirez homered as Chicago put on a power display for new owner Tom Ricketts in a win over Milwaukee.

Ricketts, the longtime fan whose family took over the team in October, joined his two brothers and sister to sing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" during the seventh-inning stretch.

Ryan Dempster (1-0) ran his career record against the Brewers to 12-3. Doug Davis (0-1) lasted 3 1-3 innings.

Roethlisberger could face punishment from NFL



MILLEDGEVILLE, Ga. (AP)—Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger may have avoided criminal charges after a college student accused him of sexually assaulting her in Georgia, but he must meet with NFL commissioner Roger Goodell and could face punishment from the league.

And Roethlisberger said he knows he'll have to work to regain the trust of teammates and fans.

Ocmulgee Circuit District Attorney Fred Bright said Monday that after exhaustive interviews and inconclusive medical exams, the 20-year-old student's accusations could not be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. Bright also revealed the accuser no longer wanted him to prosecute.

Bright said he continued to investigate the case, but ultimately decided against moving forward partly because he was never able to find out what happened behind the bathroom door at the Capital City club in Milledgeville.

"Here the overall circumstances do not lead to a viable prosecution. If they did, I would be pursuing it vigorously," Bright said. "We do not prosecute morals. We prosecute crimes."

In his first public remarks since the accusations, Roethlisberger read a 74-second statement Monday at a podium in the Steelers locker room.

"The prosecutor's decision not to bring charges, I know without a doubt, is the right conclusion," said Roethlisberger, who was wearing a red sports shirt and light-colored slacks. "I don't intend to discuss any details related to the events of Georgia. I'm happy to put this behind me and move forward."

Roethlisberger also did not discuss his upcoming meeting with Goodell or any possible punishment that might come from the league or the team for violating the players' conduct code.

"I am excited to get back to work with my teammates, and I'm more determined than ever to have a great season," he said.

The encounter took place after a night of bar-hopping in Milledgeville, a quaint central Georgia college town about 30 miles from where the two-time Super Bowl winner owns a lake



Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Ben Roethlisberger reads a statement in the NFL football team's locker room Monday, April 12, 2010, in Pittsburgh.

home. Bright detailed the night during a lengthy news conference Monday.

Roethlisberger, who was out drinking with friends to celebrate his 28th birthday, bumped into the student and her sorority sisters throughout the night. They linked up at Capital City, where he invited them to a VIP section and bought them a round of shots.

As the night wore on, the student walked down a dingy hallway to a small bathroom, and Roethlisberger soon followed. What happened next remained unclear.

The student told police she had been sexually assaulted, but medical results were less clear. A doctor who examined her at a nearby emergency room found a cut, bruises and vaginal bleeding but could not say if she was raped. And while some DNA was found, there was not enough to determine whom it belonged to, Bright said.

Roethlisberger is being sued by a different woman who says he raped her in 2008 at a Lake Tahoe hotel and casino, which he denies. Roethlisberger was not criminally charged in that case and has claimed counter-damages in the lawsuit.

In Milledgeville, state and local police canvassed the town and began interviewing witnesses. Roethlisberger hired Ed Garland, who has represented a long list of high-profile defendants. The accuser's family also hired lawyers, who eventually sent a letter to Bright saying the woman did not want a trial because it would be "a very intrusive personal experience."

Georgia laws set a relatively high bar for proving sexual assault, requiring proof that force was used and that the victim did not consent, said J. Tom Morgan, a former DeKalb County district attorney. That can be particularly difficult if both parties were drinking alcohol, he said.

As Pittsburgh's first-round draft pick out of Miami of Ohio in 2004, Roethlisberger led the Steelers to Super Bowl victories in 2006 and 2009. He frequently has donated time and money to charities.

But off-field problems have come along with his championships and \$102 million contract. In 2006, he defied his coach's orders and rode his motorcycle

without a helmet—and wound up with a concussion, broken jaw and other injuries after a wreck.

And while Roethlisberger has a reputation for patiently signing autographs and posing for pictures out in public, he also is known for occasionally inelegant behavior in Pittsburgh. Early in his career, he was photographed—obviously after drinking—wearing a T-shirt reading "Drink Like a Champion."

"I'm truly sorry for the disappointment and negative attention I brought to my family, my teammates, coaches, the Rooneys and the NFL," Roethlisberger said. "I understand that the opportunities I have been blessed with are a privilege, and much is expected of me as the quarterback of the Pittsburgh Steelers. I absolutely want to be the leader this team deserves, valued in the community and a role model to kids. I have much work to do to earn this trust."

Team president Art Rooney II, known to be frustrated and exasperated with Roethlisberger's lack of maturity and judgment, agreed that the quarterback must win back the respect and trust of his teammates and his city.

"During the past few weeks, I have met with Ben on a number of occasions, not only to discuss this incident, but also to discuss his commitment to making sure this never happens again," Rooney said in a statement.

In Pittsburgh, the reaction among fans was mixed. Some said they feared it was only a matter of time before Roethlisberger was in trouble again.

"I've seen him around a couple times and he's always got the entourage, and the aura around him and it's annoying," said Kevin Brown, a 27-year-old who watched the news conference at an upscale restaurant a stone's throw from Heinz Field. "I've seen the way he's acted."

Jim Gallagher, 54, of Butler, north of Pittsburgh, is a Steelers fan and was critical of the franchise quarterback.

"I'm disappointed in his actions. Whether he did anything that was against the law, you'll never know," Gallagher said. "I think he needs to realize he's representing the city and the Rooney family and letting everybody down by his actions. Morally, I think he's wrong."

Jets' new WR Holmes suspended 4 games by NFL

NEW YORK (AP)—Santonio Holmes was walking his dog at home Sunday night when he received an unexpected phone call.

It was the Pittsburgh Steelers, telling their talented but troubled wide receiver he had been traded to the New York Jets for a fifth-round pick in this year's draft.

"I was very shocked at first," Holmes said during a conference call Monday. "But, I knew it definitely opened up a lot more doors and a better opportunity for me to start over."

Holmes won't make his Jets regular-season debut until Week 5 of the regular season after the NFL suspended him earlier in the day without pay for the first four games for violating the league's substance abuse policy.

"We understood that was part of it, but we just felt like even with that, it was worth it," general manager Mike Tannenbaum said. "Obviously, a guy with his production and at 26 years old,

he would not have been available if these indiscretions didn't happen, and obviously the suspension. But, with that said, we just felt like the risk and the price was reasonable for us."

Unafraid lately to add players with checkered pasts, Tannenbaum said he, coach Rex Ryan and owner Woody Johnson had "a robust debate and robust discussions" before deciding to acquire Holmes.

"We're not going into this with our eyes closed," Tannenbaum said.

Holmes, the 2009 Super Bowl MVP, is eligible to participate in the team's offseason program and in all preseason practices and games. He would be suspended for an entire season if he violates the league's policy again.

"To go back down the same road, make the same mistakes, won't be accepted," Holmes said.

Holmes is coming off his best season, with 79 catches for 1,248 yards and five touchdowns. But he is also

facing a lawsuit in Florida from a woman who claims he threw a glass at her, cutting her above the eye, in an Orlando nightclub. A witness has since taken responsibility, according to Holmes' lawyer.

Holmes was also arrested in 2008 for possession of marijuana, and involved in a domestic violence incident in 2006; the misdemeanor charges were later dismissed. He was also recently accused of telling a fan to "kill myself" on his Twitter page, but implied that his account was hacked.

"It wasn't me," Holmes said. "I never tried to defend myself on that topic among anyone on Twitter or among anyone that tried to ask me for interviews. I would definitely be accountable for my actions if I did say it."

The 5-foot-11 Holmes, a first-round pick out of Ohio State in 2006, has one year remaining on his contract and will essentially be on a 12-game tryout for a long-term deal. The Jets have taken the

same one-season approach with Braylon Edwards, another wide receiver who came to New York with baggage, and cornerback Antonio Cromartie, who was acquired from San Diego even though he was dealing with paternity issues.

Holmes has 235 catches for 3,835 yards and 20 touchdowns, but his troubles off the field could explain the relatively low price the Jets paid to get him. The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette reported Monday, citing anonymous sources, that the Steelers were prepared to release Holmes if they couldn't find a trade partner.

"I don't think I need to dig myself out of any hole," Holmes said. "These guys have opened their arms to me right now and all I have to do is walk into them."

The deal came together quickly as talks between the teams began late Saturday night. Holmes gives the Jets a game-breaking player for an offense that already included second-year quarterback

Mark Sanchez, wide receivers Edwards and Jericho Cotchery, tight end Dustin Keller, running backs Shonn Greene, Leon Washington and the recently signed LaDainian Tomlinson.

"Obviously, there's been some bumps in the road in the past and hopefully he's learned from that," Tannenbaum said. "We understand that there's risks, significant risks."

Despite being benched earlier in the 2008 season for the marijuana arrest, Holmes made a number of big plays for Pittsburgh—none bigger than in the Super Bowl against Arizona. His tiptoe catch in the corner of the end zone of a 6-yard pass from Ben Roethlisberger with 35 seconds left sent the Steelers to a 27-23 victory.

The Jets clearly see Holmes as another major piece in making their own Super Bowl run after finishing a win short last season.

"I know for a fact that's why they brought me here," Holmes said. "The opportunity presented itself for the Jets to acquire me, and I'm definitely here for a reason."

32nd Saipan Swim Club Ocean Swim

Photos by ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Kensuke Kimura, right, greets Lukas Kang, who was first out of the water in the 600-meter race.



Kaito Yanai sprints to the shore after completing the 1-kilometer race.



Participants in the 1-kilometer race in the 32nd Saipan Swim Club Ocean Swim sprint to the waters off World Resort on Sunday.



Kai Staal nears completion of the 2.5-kilometer race.



Bryce Daly smiles, as he gets ready to run to the finish line.



Vener Urena finished first in the men's 40 to 49 division of the 1.3-kilometer swim.



Shin Kimura tries to chase brother Ken during the 2.5-kilometer race.



Michael Moran was out of the water fourth in the boys 2.5-kilometer race.



Angel De Jesus runs to the shore.



Suzy Kindel takes her time moving out of the water.

**Johnson
scores 31 to
help Hawks
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Saipan Tribune Sports



28 WEDNESDAY, APRIL 14, 2010

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Baseball lesson No. 1: Be aggressive

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Former San Diego Padres and Seattle Mariners scout Ray Brown started his series of clinics for players on Monday, stressing on the importance of being aggressive on the field.

"I'd rather have a player being tagged out on his way to stealing bases than having one who hesitates to move forward then heads back to the base and is thrown out," Brown said.

Brown, the Baseball Confederation of Oceania's development officer, started the series of clinics with more than 10 players in the Junior League and some coaches at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield. Assisting him was BCO certified coach/umpire and SLLB president Tony Rogolifoi.

The clinic started with the usual warm-up drills, then to infield/outfield defensive drills before Brown spent more time on primary and secondary leads off the bases.

"He who hesitates is lost. Make up your mind and don't be afraid. If you want to go and steal bases, go, as the moment you hesitate, the pitcher will pick up the signal from your body language and throw you out. Smart pitchers always look for dummy runners," Brown said.

"When you are on third base, there's nowhere to go but home. There's no turning back, so look at the pitcher, focus on his body movements and then read the signal if he

See **BASEBALL** on Page 26



Baseball Confederation of Oceania development officer Ray Brown, back, looks on as a Patriots Junior League player gets ready to sprint from third base to home plate during the first day of the baseball official's clinic at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield on Monday.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Four in a row for Bank of Guam



By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER



Bank of Guam extended its winning streak to four after routing Saipan Grand Hotel/Docomo, 120-92, in the first game in the 2nd Annual Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball on Monday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

From the lower half of the team standings, BoG moved to the upper half, occupying the sixth spot with its 5-4 record. SGH/Docomo dropped to a 1-9 slate.

Bank of Guam turned on the heat early, leading at 26-11 after the first quarter. SGH/Docomo struggled offensively as it played sans gunner John

See **FOUR** on Page 26

Bank of Guam's Jeff Quitugua, left, and Saipan Grand Hotel/Docomo's Gerald Maliwanag battle for the loose ball during their game in the Shirley's caging on Monday at the JP Center Basketball Court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Sublemente sprints way to PIC Race for a Cause win

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Butch Sublemente figured in a three-way sprint to the finish line of Saturday's PIC Race for a Cause and edged Miek Carey and Lewie Tenorio in the 50-kilometer bike race.

Sublemente completed the race in one hour, 40 minutes, and 55.15 seconds to finish ahead of 54 other participants in the Pacific Islands Club's Food & Beverage Department-organized event. Carey settled for second place with her time of 1:40:55.34, while Tenorio dropped to third 1:44:55.81.

The three riders accompanied each other from the start of the race until the turn to Kingfisher Golf Links. Sublemente then began taking the lead going down to Capital Hill.

"I maintained the lead all the way to Susupe and just hung in there until we reached the PIC compound. I knew it will be a close race, so I just prepared myself for the sprint," Sublemente said.

The three riders entered the PIC compound together, but a few meters away from the finish line at the

See **SUBLEMENTE** on Page 26



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Butch Sublemente celebrates after beating Miek Carey and Lewie Tenorio in the sprint to the finish line in the 50-kilometer PIC Race for a Cause on Sunday.

Mother and son rule April roll-offs

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
roselyn_monroyo@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

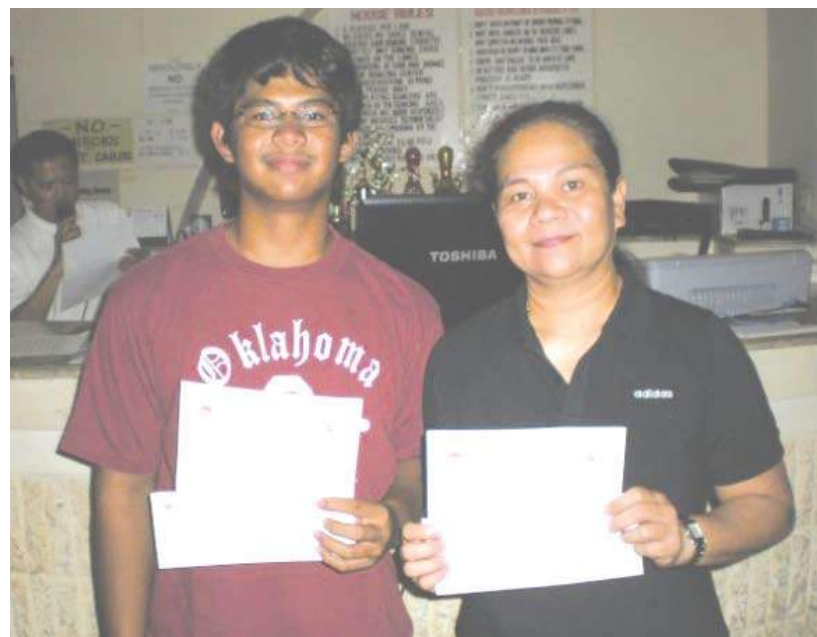
The Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes tournament for April was a family affair with mother and son, Gigi and Raphael Zapanta, winning the monthly roll-offs at the Capital Bowling Center.

Gigi took the Queen of the Lanes monthly tiara after knocking down 669 pins on Sunday. She pre-

vailed over 10 other female keglers after averaging 167.25 pinfalls. Gigi started with a Game 1 best of 186 pinfalls, then went steady in the last three games, carding 148, 182, and 153.

Lala Taitano finished second with a total of 655 pinfalls and average of 163.75 in four games. Cora Muna had a four-game total of 651 pinfalls and average 162.75 to settle

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Mother and son, Gigi and Raphael Zapanta show their certificates after ruling the April roll-offs on Sunday at the Capital Bowling Center.